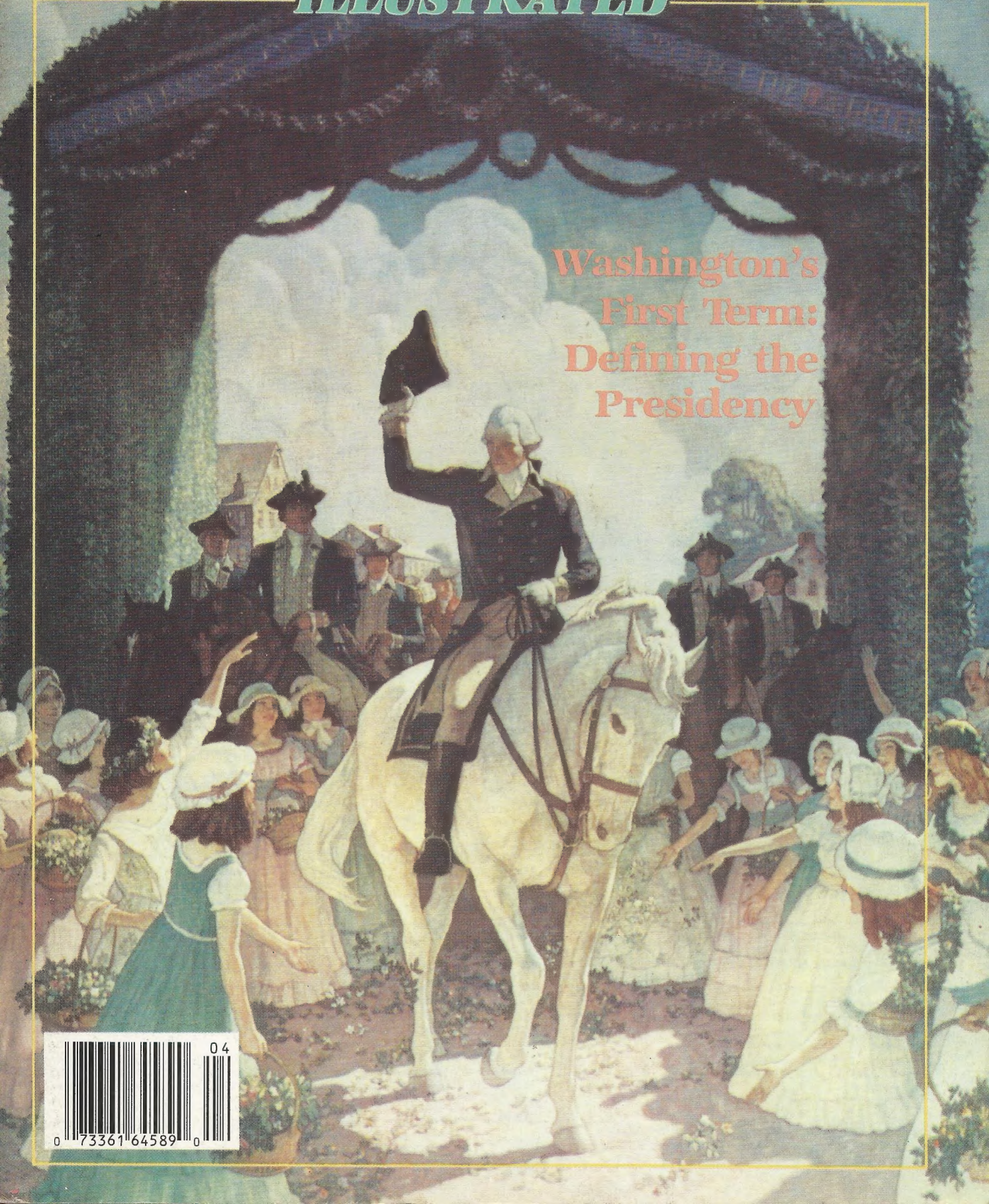


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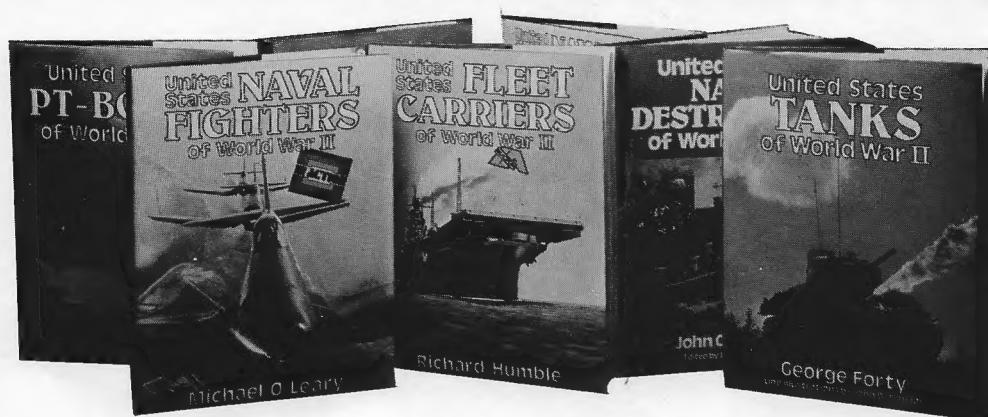
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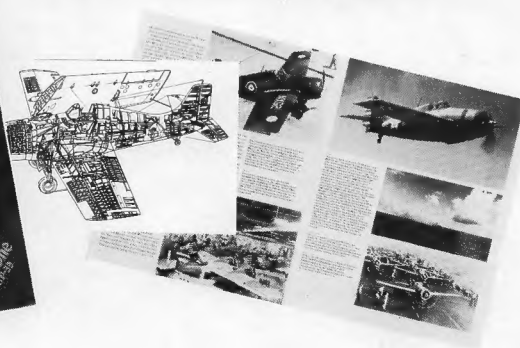
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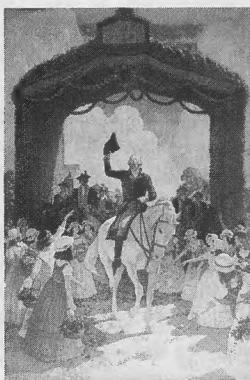


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Cover

George Washington received a kingly welcome as he rode from Mount Vernon to New York for inauguration as the first president of the United States in April 1789. At Trenton, New Jersey, the present-elect was honored by flower-throwing maidens and a triumphal arch bearing the inscription "The Defender of the Mothers will also Protect their Daughters." For an account of the first president's first months in office, see pages 32-43.

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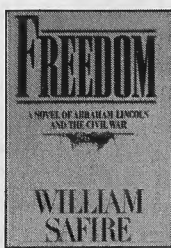
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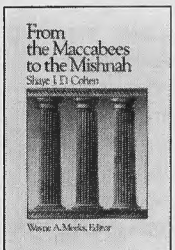
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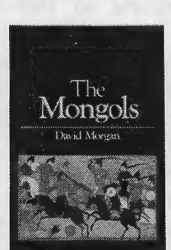
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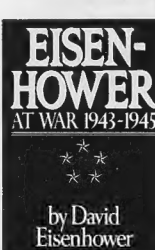
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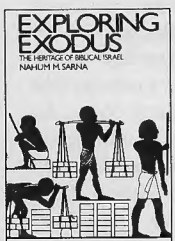


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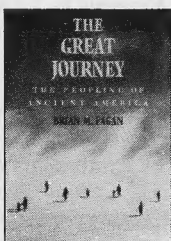
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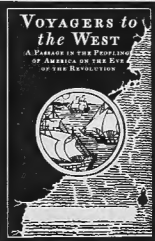
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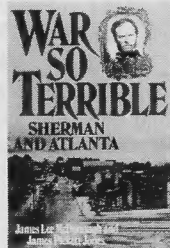
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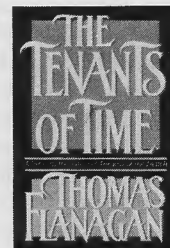
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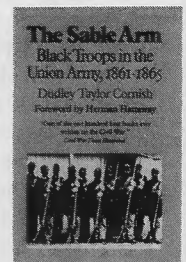
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Remembers Bomber Crash

I totally enjoyed Sharon Drain's history of the Otis Elevator [November 1987 issue]. Technically, however, the "Air Force" hadn't yet been formed, so it was an Army Air Corps (not Air Force) bomber that crashed into the Empire State Building in 1945. I was a Midshipman at the Merchant Marine Academy at the time, and rushed to Manhattan that Saturday along with millions of others to get close to that moment in history. Fog obscured everything above the thirtieth floor, however, and there was little to be seen except for blocked streets around the building, and some debris (much debris was still high above in the building). Imagine my surprise when I served as Third Mate late in 1946 with Captain Harry Gower aboard the SS *William Windom* and learned that it was his niece who was the elevator operator who had fallen eighty-nine floors when the elevator cable was severed. I recall his saying everyone thought she was dead when pulled from the elevator. He visited her in the hospital when we were in New York preparing for a voyage to Sicily more than a year after the accident. He said she had undergone many surgeries. Captain Gower is dead now. His widow, Helen, was living in Manhattan when I last heard from her in 1965. Thanks for the fine story.

James A. Poat
Anderson, Indiana

Dickens's Second Visit

Ernest L. Abel's article on Charles Dickens in the December 1987 issue

was most enjoyable. However, he barely touched on the writer's visit to Baltimore in 1842. There, at the famous Barnum's Hotel, Dickens shared an enormous mint julep with his American friend, Washington Irving. He found Baltimore "a bustling busy town, with a great deal of traffic of various kinds." And he admired the Washington Monument [in Washington, D.C.].

In 1868 Dickens was again at Baltimore on a second lecture tour. My great-grandmother, Frances Beall Knight, was in the audience at the Concordia Opera House when Dickens appeared there on February 11. Tickets sold for \$2. The two-hour program consisted of readings from the author's various works. Dickens was a consummate actor, using facial expressions and tone of voice to depict both comic and tragic situations in his stories. Next day it was reported that a "very large, intelligent, and appreciative audience found delightful entertainment in Mr. Dickens's second reading." The author enjoyed his Baltimore audience. He wrote: "The ladies are remarkably handsome, with a Eastern look upon them, dress with a strong sence of colour, and make a brilliant audience." He also found the Baltimoreans a bright, responsive people, "very pleasant to read to." But he also felt that the city still wore "a look of sullen remembrance," haunted by the ghost of slavery. And he recalled that the ladies used to spit whenever they passed a Northern soldier.

Alexandra Lee Levin
Baltimore, Maryland

Truckin' Tanker

Regarding "Wake's Forgotten Sur-

vivors" by Reba Wilkerson [December 1987 issue]: "For four days the tanker plied its way across the calm Pacific toward the tiny outpost about 2,300 miles west of Hawaii."

Either Wake is not 2,300 miles west of Hawaii, or the number of days in transit is wrong, or this was the fastest tanker in the world in 1941.

To travel 2,300 miles in 96 hours would require that ship to average 23.95 land miles per hour, about twice the average cruising speed of a WWII tanker.

As a WWII Naval veteran of several years, familiar with tankers and transports, I can tell you that the U.S. Navy would have loved to have Reba's tanker—we wouldn't need an escort!

Otherwise the article and its companion piece, "Return to Wake," were great reading.

I have subscribed to *American History Illustrated* and *Civil War Times Illustrated* since the inception of both. Keep up the good work.

Robert D. Bundock
Stamford, Connecticut

The editors welcome comments from our readers. While we endeavor to publish a representative sampling of this correspondence, we regret that limited space prevents us from printing every letter. Publication of reader comments does not necessarily imply editorial endorsement of the views expressed. Address correspondence to The Mailbox, American History Illustrated, Box 8200, Harrisburg, PA 17105. ★

Key to Works of Art Reproduced in Morse's "The Gallery of the Louvre" (pages 48-49):

[Left to right, top to bottom by columns] Column 1: *The Marriage at Cana* by Veronese; two unidentified works. Column 2: *The Immaculate Conception* by Murillo; *The Descent from the Cross* by Jouvenet. Column 3: *Self Portrait* by Tintoretto; *The Deluge* by Poussin; *The Fortune Teller* by Caravaggio; *The Crowning with Thorns* by Titian. Column 4: *Venus Entreating Vulcan* by Van Dyck; *The Landing of Cleopatra* by Claude Lorrain; *The Holy Family* by Murillo; *The Knife Grinder* by Teniers, the Younger; *Tobias and the Angel* by Rembrandt. Column 5: *Diogenes Casting Away His Cup* by Poussin; *The Supper at Emmaus* by Titian. Column 6: *Landscape* by Huysmans; *Portrait of a Lady and Her Daughter* by Van Dyck; *Francis I, King of France* by Titian; *A Beggar Boy* by Murillo; *Christ Fallen Under the Cross* by Veronese; *The Mona Lisa* by Leonardo da Vinci. Column 7: *Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine* by Corregio; *The Flight of Lot and His Family from Sodom* by Rubens; *Sunset-View of a Seaport* by Claude Lorrain; *The Entombment* by Titian; *Christ Bearing the Cross* by Le Sueur. Column 8: *Landscape with Soldiers and Hunters* by Salvator Rosa; *La Belle Jardinière* by Raphael; *Man Dressed in Black* by Van Dyck; *The Union of Design and Color* by Guido Reni; *Suzanne Fourment* by Rubens; *Rest on the Flight to Egypt* by Simone Cantarini. Column 9: *Head of an Old Man* by Rembrandt; *The Woman Taken in Adultery* by Van Dyck; *A Marine View by Moonlight* by Vernet. Column 10: *Dejanira and the Centaur Nessus* by Guido Reni; *Thomysris, Queen of the Massagetae* by Rubens; *Madonna and Child* by Mignard; and *Embarkation from Cythera* by Watteau.

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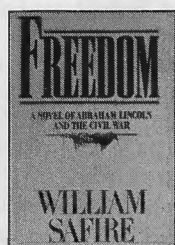
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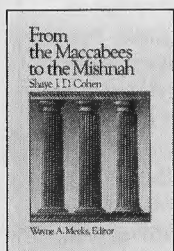
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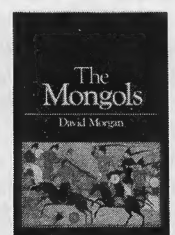
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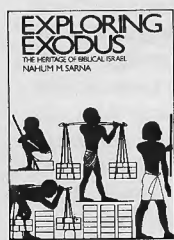


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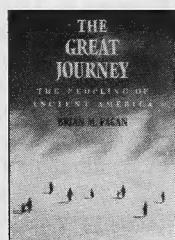
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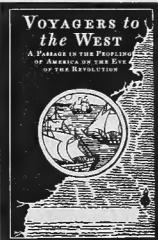
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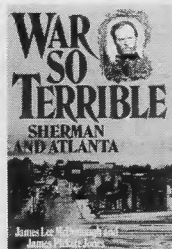
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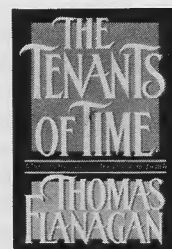
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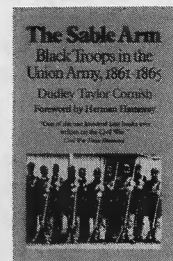
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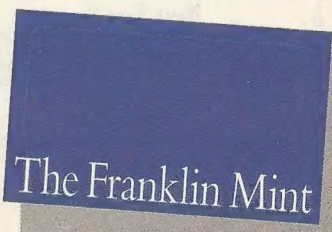
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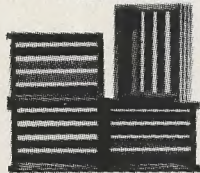
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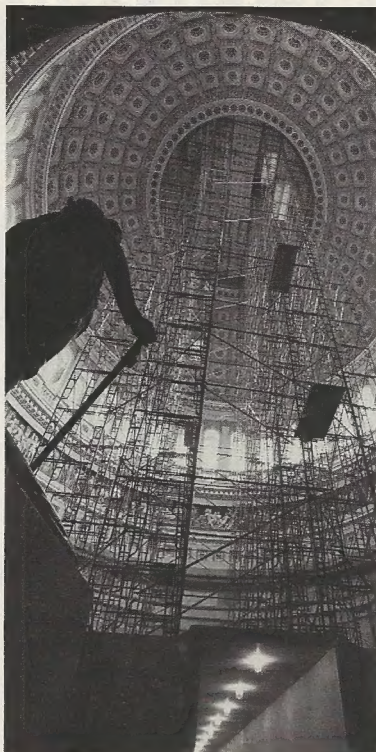
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Capitol Dome Restoration

An ongoing restoration project in the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., will remove the grime of more than a century from an allegorical fresco painted on the canopy of the Capitol dome by Constantino Brumidi in 1864-65.

The Apotheosis of George Washington depicts the first American president flanked by female figures representing Liberty and Victory, encircled by thirteen maidens symbolizing the original thirteen states. Other figures portray War, Freedom, Arts and Sciences, Commerce, Agriculture, and a depiction of the transatlantic cable that was being laid when Brumidi painted the fresco.

The facelift of the 4,664-square-foot fresco, high above the Capitol rotunda, began in June 1987 and is expected to be completed in time for the bicentennial of the U.S. Congress in 1989.

The artist, an Italian immigrant who fled to the United States to escape his country's political turmoil, painted numerous capitol frescos. He completed *The Apotheosis* in eleven months during the Civil War, shortly after the new dome was completed.

Gettysburg Anniversary Commemoration

Four battle re-enactments and a "living history" encampment commemorating the 125th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg will be held June 24-26 on a farm about five miles southeast of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

Visitors to the encampment, which is sponsored by the American Civil War Commemorative Committee, Inc., will view recreations of both camp and civilian life of the 1860s. The re-enactors' uniforms, weapons, and accoutrements will be reproductions of those used in the War Between the States, and broadcast narrations will help viewers trace the action of the battle re-enactments.

The encampment has been planned for the week prior to the actual 125th anniversary dates (July 1-3) because of numerous activities already scheduled for those days. Below is a brief list of activities for both weekends:

Friday, June 24—Battle re-enactment: "The Opening Action on McPherson's Ridge"

Saturday, June 25—Civilian "Sanitary Fair" (During the Civil War, citizens sold crafts, food, and services at these gatherings to earn money for soldiers' medicine and clothing); Battle re-enactments: "Third Day Cavalry Action" and "The Wheatfield"

Sunday, June 26—Battle re-enactment: "Pickett's Charge" (expected to be re-created at nearly half-scale)

Friday, July 1—Review and tactical demonstration of "troops" in a Gettysburg National Military Park-sponsored encampment of 1,000 "living historians."

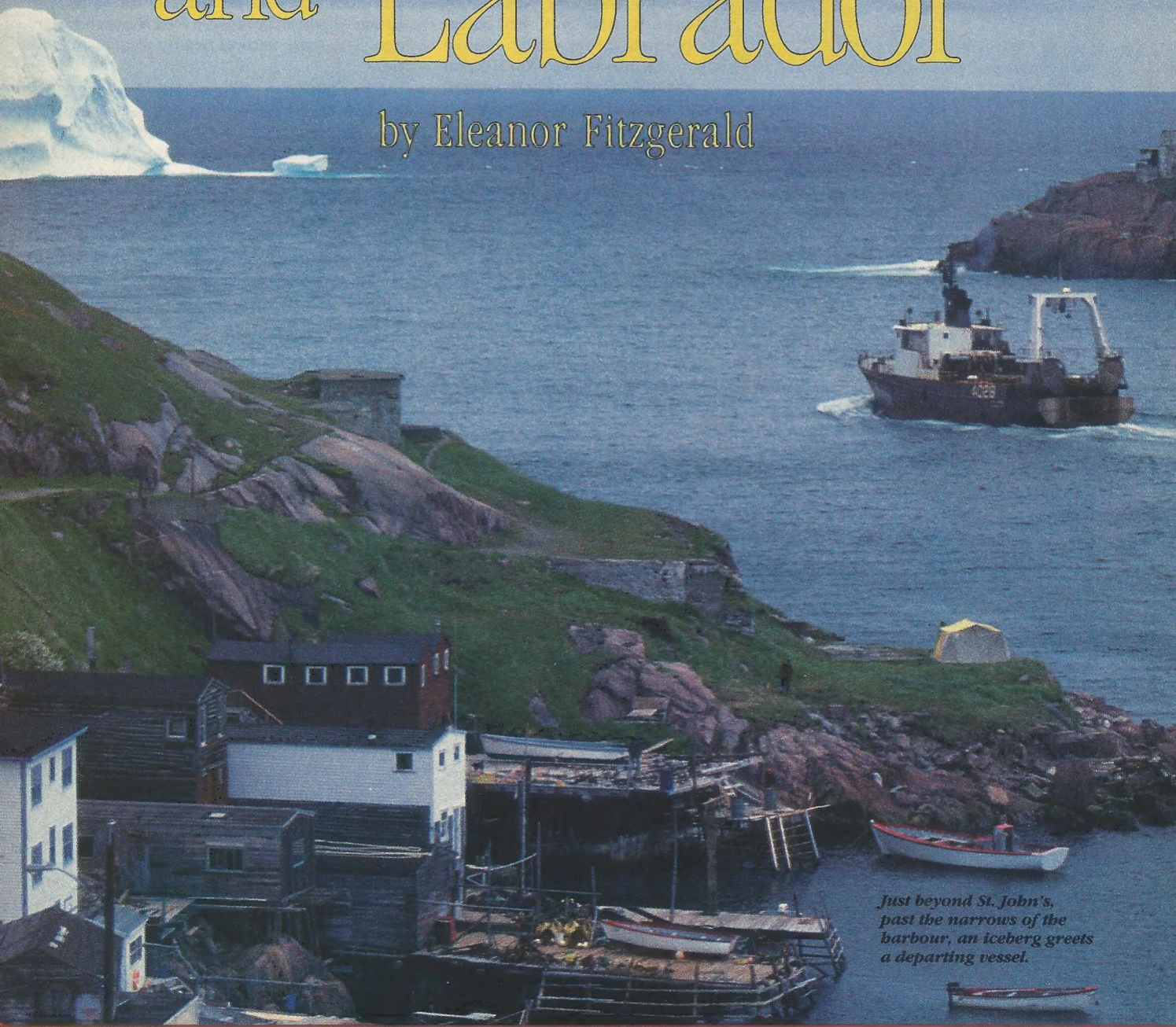
Saturday, July 2—Tactical demonstration by Park Service-sponsored "living historians;" ceremony marking opening of the new Gettysburg Museum of the Civil War, in the park's visitors' center.

Sunday, July 3—Ecumenical memorial services at Park Service encampment; rededication of the Peace Light Memorial.

For more information contact The Gettysburg Travel Council, 35 Carlisle St., Gettysburg, PA 17325; 717-334-6274. ★

Newfoundland and Labrador

by Eleanor Fitzgerald



*Just beyond St. John's,
past the narrows of the
harbour, an iceberg greets
a departing vessel.*

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

A Tradition of Discovery

Advertisement



DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Above, a whale flicks its tail near a seaside community. Below, The sixteenth-century village of Quidi Vidi is a short walk from downtown St. John's and a good place to purchase fresh fish.

Visiting Newfoundland is, for many Americans, a voyage into the unknown.

But Newfoundland and Labrador attracted some of North America's first explorers, and today's travelers who enjoy history will not be disappointed either. Early visitors included Vikings who lived at the tip of the island around 1,000 AD. Long before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, Basque, Portuguese, French, and English fishermen harvested the rich Atlantic waters. Come retrace the island's history for yourself and enjoy the physical beauty and cultural richness which have pulled people towards Newfoundland and Labrador for centuries.

The province of Newfoundland and Labrador forms the most easterly edge of North America. Part of Canada since 1949, Newfoundland was England's first overseas colony and the destination of many early voyages to the New World. Before John Cabot's first trip to Newfoundland in 1497 (the official dis-

covery of the island), ancient Indian and Inuit people lived on the island and in Labrador. At the visitor's center at the Port au Choix National Historic Park, you can see a display of artifacts from this ancient Maritime Archaic Culture. Rich marine resources, huge forests, and plentiful wildlife attracted these people to the Northern Peninsula four thousand years ago. The same natural beauty remains to this day.

The Northern Peninsula's highway, re-named the "Viking Trail," takes tourists through resplendent Gros Morne National Park. Victorian houses in Woody Point, boat trips to majestic waterfalls and fjords, camping, hiking, and wildlife such as caribou, moose, whales, and seabirds make Gros Morne an ideal place to begin a trip to Newfoundland and Labrador. Park interpreters will help plan your visit and have a wealth of information on local wildlife and natural history.

The Long Range mountains running up the peninsula provide some spectacular scenery and were formed by the same geological upheaval as the Appalachian mountains.



PAUL POPE

The restored sod houses at L'Anse aux Meadows were home to a Viking settlement in 1,000 A.D.



DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

All along this coast, Newfoundland's oldest fishing traditions continue. Summer festivals throughout the Northern Peninsula celebrate shrimp, lobster and cod—a good opportunity for locals and visitors alike to indulge in delicious sea food. Be sure to ask for pies, tarts, and cakes made with local wild berries.

The only authentic Viking ruins in North America lie at L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Reconstructed sod houses, a forge for rendering bog iron, and ancient household artifacts displayed in the Visitor's Center bring to life the small band of men and women who lived here more than a thousand years ago. Relying on the thirteenth-century sagas and archaeological evidence, historians believe that this group of Vikings, the first to see North America, probably shipped lumber back to Greenland before their disappearance. "Lief the Lucky" may well have been one of these hardy settlers.

Heading across the Straits of Belle Isle to see Labrador should be part of every trip to Newfoundland. The vast interior of Labrador is undeveloped, but adventurous travelers can hire outfitters for wilderness camping, hunting and fishing excursions. Driving to Labrador is easy; a ferry from St. Barbe lands in Blanc-Sablon, Quebec, close to the Labrador border. Here, a stretch of road meanders through a dozen fishing communities that host a unique event. Each August they hold a celebration of the bakeapple, a tasty yellow berry. The festival features folk music, games, fishing, berry-picking contests and community suppers. While in Labrador, you might be lucky and see the Aurora Borealis, or northern lights, filling the night sky with color.

In the Labrador town of Red Bay, one of North America's most fascinating archaeological excavations is underway. Here, in the fourteenth- and fifteenth-centuries, Basque whalers operated a huge oil refinery employing up to 900 people. The *San Juan*, a Basque ship, sank in Red Bay harbour in 1565 and was recently excavated by Parks Canada. Archaeological finds, so far, include a Basque graveyard, clothing, pottery, and try works

where the whale oil was rendered before being barrelled and shipped to Europe. You may tour the island, see the conservation laboratory, and chat with archaeologists. Many visitors have shared the excitement in Red Bay whenever an important artifact has been found.

Crossing Newfoundland from the west coast to the Avalon Peninsula can be an opportunity for camping or picnicking in dozens of provincial parks. Newfoundland's landscape is diverse, dramatic, and beautiful. Forests and clear rivers cover the interior, while quiet bays and thundering surf shape the coastline. Hotels, motels, and hospitality homes (Newfoundland's bed-and-breakfast experience), are scattered throughout the island making trips to coastal communities and nearby islands easy to arrange.

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have a long tradition of welcoming travelers into their homes and communities. Summer festivals, trout fishing, and garden parties are just some of the many activities that await visitors in the friendly fishing villages. Skillfully made hooked rugs and knitted goods are sold throughout the island. Plan to visit some of the community museums that are full of appealing memorabilia and antiques. What better way to learn history or hear about the days of sailing ships?

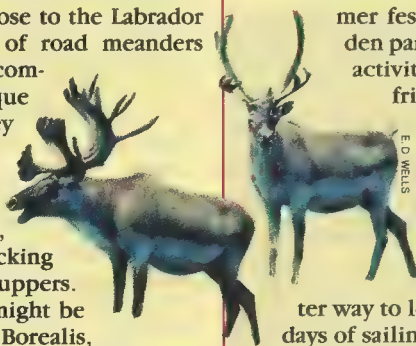
A number of villages have carefully preserved their older buildings, and local historic societies welcome visitors. Both Brigus and Trinity, two lovely towns that lie on the east coast of the island, demonstrate the care taken in preserving the island's heritage. Brigus, with its stone walls and white houses, was home to the famous explorer Captain Robert Bartlett who sailed with Peary towards the North Pole.

In Trinity, tours are offered at the restored Hiscock House, a village merchant's



DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

The dancing Northern Lights of Labrador. Below, Newfoundland and Labrador's caribou herds live in the unspoiled wilderness of the province.



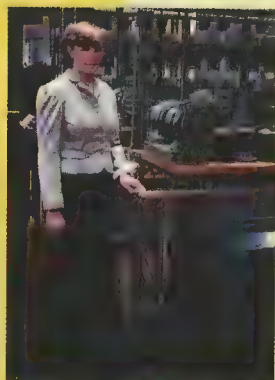
E.O. WELLS

Traditional native crafts, like these hooked rugs, continue to enchant locals and visitors alike. Below, Guides in period dress wait to take you through the first transatlantic cable station (1866) in Heart's Content.

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM



WAYNE STOCKWOOD

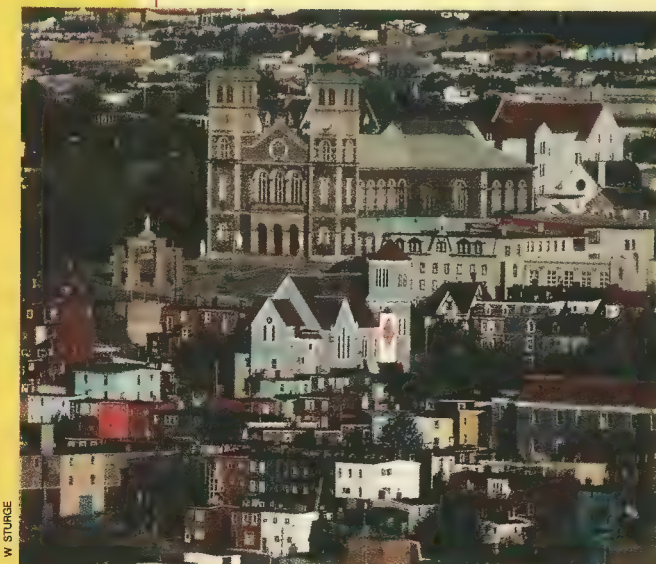


home. Other beautiful period buildings make the town of Trinity a fine example of a rural Newfoundland village. At the restored lighthouses in Bonavista (1843), and at the National Historic Park at Cape Spear (1835), the easternmost point in North America, you can go back in time to life in an early lighthouse.

During the 1400s and 1500s, exploration of Newfoundland and Labrador resulted in large numbers of fishing vessels leaving the ports of Spain, Portugal, France, England, Ireland, and Scotland to search for cod off the island's Grand Banks. Fish were vital to Europe and organized settlement on the island began in the 1600s. An early resident of Cupids wrote home rapturously in 1616:

"But of all, the most admirable is the sea, so diversified with fish abounding therein, the consideration where of is ready to swallow up and drowne my senses."

In 1621, Sir George Calvert started a small colony on the southern shore. After a few winters, he went south, and as Lord Baltimore, settled Maryland instead. Today, Calvert's colony lies under the thriving community of Ferryland. After a stop at the Historical Museum, take a stroll along the inviting Ferryland Downs, a favorite landscape for artists.



W. STURGE

St. John's, North America's oldest city, is becoming America's newest holiday destination.

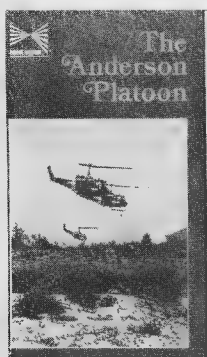
By the end of the eighteenth-century, France and England had largely settled their disputes over who had overall rights to govern Newfoundland, but the French did not relinquish all rights to fishing grounds until 1904. Conflicts between the two countries resulted in a number of battles. Forts in St. John's and Placentia are testimony to the turbulent first years of the colony.

St. John's, the capital of Newfoundland, has been inhabited since the beginning of the sixteenth-century and is reputedly the oldest city in North America. The captivating Victorian style of old St. John's is a result of the city's rebuilding after a devastating fire in 1892. The towering Roman Catholic Basilica was one of a few buildings left standing after the disaster. Wandering up and down the hilly streets of St. John's overlooking the busy harbour, you can see and hear how strong the English and Irish ties remain in this part of the New World.

The Newfoundland Museum in St. John's displays artifacts from the days of the Grand Bank Schooners as well as pre-historic finds from around the island and Labrador. Commissariat House, a graceful Georgian home dating to 1830, is just one of the Provincial Historic Sites in and around the city that brings Newfoundland's history to life.

In the recent past, Newfoundland has seen many historic moments right on its own shores. Near Cabot Tower on Signal Hill overlooking the narrows of St. John's harbour, Guglielmo Marconi received the first transatlantic message in 1901. In 1866 at Heart's Content in Trinity Bay, the first successful transatlantic cable was installed. Today, the station is a museum offering guided tours. Another historic event began in Lester's Field outside St. John's. Alcock and Brown took off from there in a Vickers Vimy biplane on June 14, 1919, and crash-landed the next day in Ireland—the first non-stop transatlantic flight.

Newfoundland and Labrador offers visitors an intriguing history and an abundance of recreational possibilities throughout its unique and unspoiled countryside. For those who find ferries part of the fun, Newfoundland has two ferry services that land on the west and east coasts of the island. Ferries also travel along the Labrador coast, and shorter trips can be taken around the island at leisure. Air service and car rentals are available throughout this dramatically different province. For information on camping, events, festivals, and accommodations, contact the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Development and Tourism, PO Box 2016, St. John's, NFLD, A1C 5R8, or call toll-free 1-800-563-6353. Come discover old world tradition and new world adventure for a truly different vacation.



The Anderson Platoon (*Home Vision, 945 Concord, Framingham, Massachusetts 01701, toll free 1-800-262-8600 or 617-879-1720 in Massachusetts; VHS or Beta, 64 minutes, \$19.95*).

French producer Pierre Schoendoerffer spent six weeks during 1966 in Vietnam with West Pointer Lieutenant Joseph Anderson's integrated combat platoon of thirty-three American soldiers. The result was this Academy Award-winning documentary—showing battles and the quiet moments between them—that aired as a news special in 1987. As the film begins, the men receive Communion during a religious service in the field, while artillery shells explode in the background. In a later sequence the camera zooms in on each soldier as the platoon picks its way through a swamp; each man is identified, and those who were later wounded or killed are momentarily frozen on the screen, stop-action style. Revealing a side of Vietnam most viewers are unlikely to have seen, *The Anderson Platoon* may be to the Vietnam conflict what *All Quiet on the Western Front* is to World War I, says *Life* magazine.

The Battle of Shiloh (*Classic Images Video Productions, P.O. Box 2399, Columbia MD 21045, 301-997-5075; VHS or Beta, 55 minutes, \$49.95*).

Classic Images has produced a series of 125th-anniversary Civil War re-enactment videos that include "The Battle of Shiloh," the largest American re-enactment to date, with more than seven thousand participants. The tapes feature a combination of re-enactors and computer graphics detailing major battle plans, as well as still photo-

graphs and thumbnail sketches of major military leaders. "The Battle of First Manassas (Bull Run)" [53 minutes, \$49.95] includes an introductory section on the background of the 1850s American political environment and the rise of Lincoln; "The Battle of Saylor's Creek" [35 minutes, \$39.95] summarizes the downfall of the Confederate army and the major Northern leaders involved. "The Surrender at Appomattox" [18 minutes, \$29.95] is also available. Period music and songs about the Civil War era accompany the narratives. An unusual feature of the tapes is that the re-enactors give the appearance of being interviewed by Civil War reporters.

The West of the Imagination (*Films for the Humanities, Box 2053, Princeton, New Jersey 08540, toll-free 1-800-257-5126; VHS or Beta, about 60 minutes each, \$179.00/tape or \$974.00/series of six*).

First aired on PBS last year, this magnificent six-part production on the American West is now available on videocassette. The complete set includes: "The Romantic Horizon," the story of the West of Lewis and Clark as seen through artists George Catlin, Karl Bodmer, and Alfred Jacob Miller; "The Golden Land," concerning westward migration, expansion, the Gold Rush, and travel on the Oregon Trail in the mid-nineteenth century; "Images of Glory," the time of the Civil War in the East, the end of the Indian Wars, the transcontinental railroad, and the final days of the Old West; "The Wild Riders," highlighting the artwork of Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell; "Play the Legend,"

featuring the West of Buffalo Bill, of the silver screen, and of writers' imaginations; and "Enduring Dreams," recounting the continuing legend—and myth—of the West, still a land of promises and dreams. The tapes may also be rented.

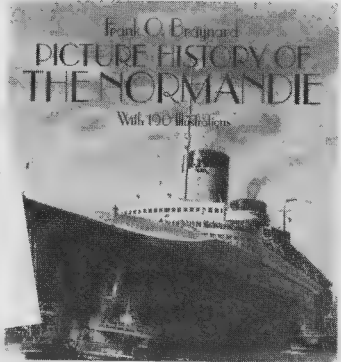
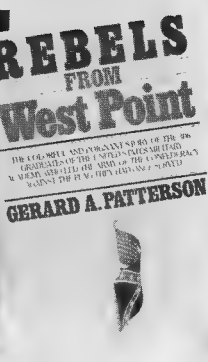
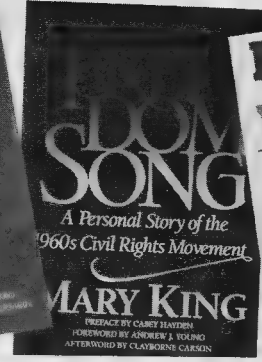
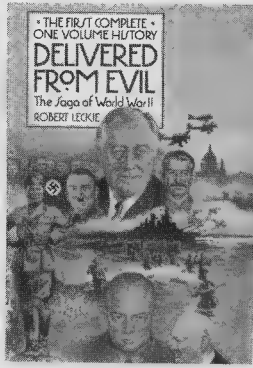
The Korean War: The Fight for Democracy (*Military History Films, P.O. Box 242, Leesburg, Virginia 22075, 703-771-9400; VHS or Beta, 75 minutes, \$41.95*).

Combat film footage highlights this two-part production on the three-year war President Harry S. Truman called a "police action" and a "conflict." In the first segment, scenes of modern-day battle-scarred Korea provide an introduction to rare footage of the war that tore apart the 4,000-year-old culture and split the country along the 38th Parallel. Soldiers' first-person accounts make up most of the narrative. The second part of the film is U.S. Air Force footage of dog-fights between American jet aircraft and Russian-built MIG fighters, engaged in battle during the Chinese offensive that pushed to the south previously victorious U.N. forces. The conflict ended in a stalemate. This tape is one in a series of ten combat films from World War II to Vietnam.

Correction

Orders for *Witness to the Storm* [November 1987 "Sight & Sound"] and *The Last Full Measure* [January 1988 "Sight & Sound"] should be placed through Grunwald and Radcliff Publishers, 5049 Admiral Wright Road, Suite 344, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23462, 804-490-1132. ★

History Bookshelf



Delivered From Evil: The Saga of World War II by Robert Leckie (*Harper & Row, New York City, 1987; 955 pages, \$29.95*).

One would scarcely think it possible to write a complete one-volume history of World War II. But prolific writer Robert Leckie has produced a masterful political and military history of that great war that reads almost like historical fiction (one of Leckie's specialties). Beginning with the 1919 Versailles Treaty and ending with the September 2, 1945 surrender of Japan, Leckie briefly covers every major battle and personality (the index alone is more than forty pages). While descriptions of some events and leaders may appear oversimplified, Leckie has nevertheless succeeded in presenting a gripping and informative popular history of the war and, most notably, of its main characters. For anyone who dreads facing the plethora of material on World War II, this volume will be a welcome source.

The Leo Frank Case by Leonard Dinnerstein (*The University of Georgia Press, Athens, Georgia, 1988; 177 pages, \$12.95*).

Those who watched the NBC television miniseries "The Murder of Mary Phagan," which aired in late January, will want to read the only full account of the murders of a thirteen-year-old factory worker and her alleged killer Leo Frank. In April 1913 Phagan's body was found in the basement of the Atlanta pencil factory where she worked. Frank, the factory manager, was arrested and accused of the crime on what Dinnerstein considers less than-convincing evidence. Apparently then-Georgia

Governor John M. Slaton also harbored doubts about Frank's guilt; he commuted Frank's death sentence. As a result of his unpopular decision, Slaton was never again elected to a public office in Georgia. Later, a mob kidnapped and lynched Frank near Phagan's hometown. Dinnerstein presents the facts of the case in an interesting, readable manner while also putting the events in a sociocultural context that tries to explain the public hysteria that resulted from the murder and subsequent trial.

Freedom Song: A Personal Story of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement by Mary King (*William Morrow and Co. Inc., New York, 1987; 574 pages, \$22.95*).

This memoir tells the story of a white woman, newly graduated from college, who went south to work for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a civil rights organization. The account records not only what King experienced between 1962 and 1965 when she worked for SNCC, but also the involvement of such civil rights leaders as Andrew Young, Julian Bond, Marion Barry, John Lewis, Martin Luther King, Jr., and John F. Kennedy. The reader gets an "insider's" view of the commitment, philosophy, and planning behind the marches, the demonstrations—the whole civil rights movement.

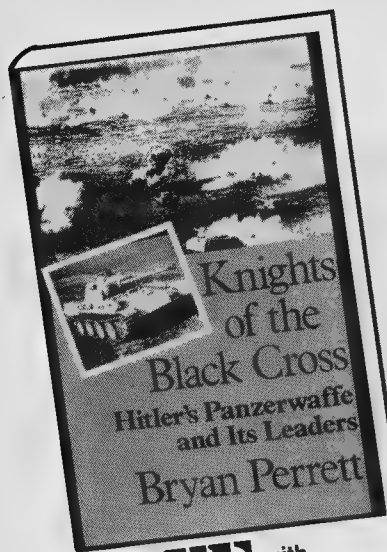
Rebels from West Point by Gerard A. Patterson (*Doubleday, New York City, 1987; 183 pages, illustrated, \$16.95*).

When war erupted between the states in 1861, members of a select

group of men were forced to make a critical decision. West Point graduates all, they had to choose between allegiance to the Stars and Stripes or the Stars and Bars. Once companions, classmates, and even Army leaders together, each now had to choose whom to join with, and whom to face on the Civil War's bloody battlefields. The 306 officers who chose the South led a ragtag band of unprepared soldiers against a vastly larger and better-equipped foe, staving off defeat for four years before their decimated ranks and broken spirits forced a Southern surrender. From Robert E. Lee to J.E.B. Stuart, these Confederate former West Pointers march across the pages of Gerard Patterson's captivating book—a must for Civil War enthusiasts.

Picture History of the Normandie by Frank O. Braynard (*Dover Publications, Inc., Mineola, New York, 1987; 133 pages, illustrated, \$9.95*).

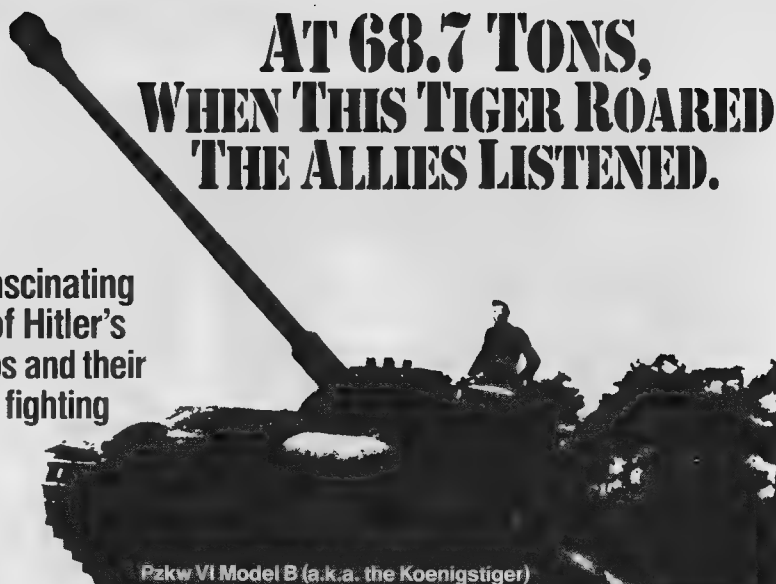
Maritime expert Frank O. Braynard's account of the French luxury liner *Normandie* is based on material the author collected since his boyhood. (He visited the ship when she was berthed in New York City in 1939.) The first liner to exceed 1,000 feet in length, the *Normandie* remained the largest of all passenger ships during the span of her brief active life. Most poignant is Braynard's depiction of her unnecessary destruction at a New York pier in 1942, caused, in the author's estimation, by carelessness and incompetence. This nostalgic volume, with 190 black and white photographs, captures the elegance and grace of the now-vanished era of great ships.



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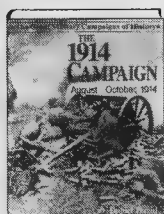
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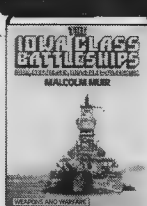
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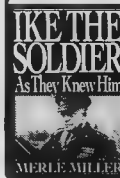
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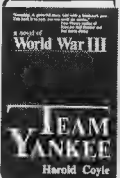
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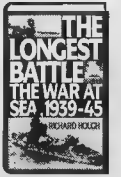
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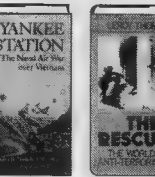
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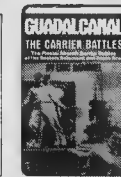
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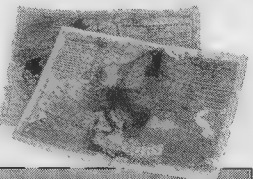
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History Bookshelf



Klaus Fuchs, Atom Spy by Robert Chadwell Williams (*Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1987; 267 pages, illustrated, \$25.00*).

Between 1942 and 1949, German physicist Klaus Fuchs passed some of the Free World's most sensitive nuclear technology to the Russians. A Communist hired by the British to help develop the atomic bomb, Fuchs was granted top-level security clearance that subsequently gave him access to the most highly classified secrets of the Manhattan Project; the Americans relied on this British clearance when asking Fuchs to join Oppenheimer's Los Alamos team. Fuchs's espionage trial touched off a "witch hunt" in America that resulted in the capture of the Rosenbergs and other alleged spies. This first full-length account is based on newly available material from the Atomic Energy Commission and from FBI files, and details the espionage of Fuchs as being part of a much larger Soviet effort to penetrate British intelligence.

Baseball: An Illustrated History by David Quentin Voigt (*The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, Pennsylvania and London, 1987; 384 pages, illustrated, \$38.50*).

Voigt's single-volume baseball history "takes you out to the ballpark" to illustrate the game's evolution from stickball contests played in village squares during the American Revolution to the modern professional sport in the eighties. The author also examines the black major leagues, the minor leagues and semi-pro action, and the amateur forms of the game, in-

cluding college-level competition. More than four hundred photos are integrated into the historical narrative. Baseball fans and the sports-minded will especially enjoy this account.

Guardians of the Sea: History of the United States Coast Guard 1915 to the Present by Robert Erwin Johnson (*Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 1987; 416 pages, illustrated, \$23.95*).

An operational history describing the U.S. Coast Guard's participation in World Wars I and II, other military engagements, and its multifaceted peacetime duties, is presented here for the first time in a compact, readable volume. Maritime historian and former Coast Guardsman Robert Johnson calls the work a sequel to Stephen Hadley Evans's *United States Coast Guard. 1790-1915: A Definitive History* (1949). Johnson's work includes a brief organizational history of the U.S. Revenue-Cutter and Life-Saving services, which joined in 1915 to form the U.S. Coast Guard.

Lee's Tarnished Lieutenant: James Longstreet and His Place in Southern History by William Garrett Piston (*The University of Georgia Press, Athens, Georgia and London, 1987; 252 pages, \$24.95*).

Confederate General James Longstreet, Robert E. Lee's close friend and second-in-command, has long been spurned by the South as the man responsible for the loss of the Battle at Gettysburg, and, ultimately, the entire Civil War. But author William Garrett Piston reveals

that Longstreet warned his superior that an offensive attack on the entrenched federal position would be doomed to failure, and that Lee ordered Longstreet to make a frontal assault anyway. Piston claims that Longstreet's negative image was also caused by his postwar affiliation with the Republican party and his cooperation with the Radicals during Reconstruction. Because the author assumes the reader has a moderate amount of prior knowledge, this book is best for those with a keen interest in the Civil War. In all the South no monument exists in recognition of Longstreet, but this fine military biography serves as some compensation for the so-called Southern "Judas."

Ace! A Marine Night-Fighter Pilot in World War II by Colonel R. Bruce Porter with Eric Hammel (*Pacifica Press, 1149 Grand Teton Drive, Pacifica, California, 1987; 278 pages, illustrated, \$22.95*).

This autobiography (co-authored by Eric Hammel) recounts Bruce Porter's life as a U.S. Marine combat fighter pilot. "Bruce Porter's wartime experiences in many, many ways echo the Pacific War experiences of so many Marine combat fighter pilots," notes Colonel Gregory "Pappy" Boyington in his introduction. "His story is our story." However, Porter was one of only about two hundred of the Marine Corps' ten thousand wartime pilots to enter night combat, making his story unusual as well. From his days as a cadet to his rare night-time double kill over Okinawa, the former "ace" recounts his high-flying adventures in an easy-to-read style. ★

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A noted biographer examines the life and legacy of the civil rights leader who may have been the most-loved and most-hated man in America during the turbulent 1960s.

Trumpet of Conscience

A Portrait of
Martin Luther King, Jr.

by Stephen B. Oates

HE WAS M.L. to his parents, Martin to his wife and friends, Doc to his aides, Reverend to his male parishioners, Little Lord Jesus to adoring churchwomen, De Lawd to his young critics in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and Martin Luther King, Jr., to the world. At his pulpit or a public rostrum, he seemed too small for his incomparable oratory and international fame as a civil rights leader and spokesman for world peace. He stood only five feet seven, and had round cheeks, a trim mustache, and sad, glistening eyes—eyes that revealed both his inner strength and his vulnerability.

He was born in Atlanta on January 15, 1929, and grew up in the relative comfort of the black middle class. Thus he never suffered the want and privation that plagued the majority of American blacks of his time. His father, a gruff, self-made man, was pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church and an outspoken member of Atlanta's black leadership. M.L. joined his father's church when he was five and came to regard it as his second home. The church defined his world, gave it order and balance, taught him how to "get along with people." Here M.L. knew who he was—"Reverend King's boy," somebody special.

At home, his parents and maternal grandmother reinforced his self-esteem, praising him for his precocious ways, telling him repeatedly that he was *somebody*. By age five, he spoke like an adult and had such a prodigious memory that he could recite whole Biblical passages and entire hymns without a mistake. He was acutely sensitive, too, so much so that he worried about all the blacks he saw in Atlanta's breadlines during the Depression, fearful that their children did not have enough to eat. When his maternal grandmother died, twelve-year-old M.L. thought it



The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., was relatively unknown in 1955 when his oratory skills caught the attention of black leaders organizing a boycott against segregated city buses in Montgomery, Alabama. Selected as spokesman, King, seen above with wife Coretta and boycott organizer E.D. Nixon at his side at the Montgomery County Courthouse, soon rose to national prominence as a moral voice for civil rights.

was his fault. Without telling anyone, he had slipped away from home to watch a parade, only to find out when he returned that she had died. He was terrified that God had taken her away as punishment for his "sin." Guilt-stricken, he tried to kill himself by leaping out of his second-story window.

He had a great deal of anger in him. Growing up a black in segregated Atlanta, he felt the full range of southern racial discrimination. He discovered that he had to attend separate, inferior schools, which he sailed through with a modicum of effort, skipping grades as he went. He found out that he—a preacher's boy—could not sit at lunch counters in Atlanta's downtown stores. He had to drink from a "colored" water fountain, relieve himself in a rancid "colored" restroom, and ride a rickety "colored" elevator. If he rode a city bus, he had

to sit in the back as though he were contaminated. If he wanted to see a movie in a downtown theater, he had to enter through a side door and sit in the "colored" section in the balcony. He discovered that whites referred to blacks as "boys" and "girls" regardless of age. He saw "WHITES ONLY" signs staring back at him in the windows of barber shops and all the good restaurants and hotels, at the YMCA, the city parks, golf courses, swimming pools, and in the waiting rooms of the train and bus stations. He learned that there were even white and black sections of the city and that he resided in "nigger town."

Segregation caused a tension in the boy, a tension between his parents' injunction ("Remember, you are *somebody*") and a system that constantly demeaned and insulted him. He struggled with the pain and rage he felt when a white woman in a downtown store slapped him and called him "a little nigger" . . . when a bus driver called him "a black son-of-a-bitch" and made him surrender his seat to a white . . . when he stood on the very spot in Atlanta where whites had lynched a black man . . . when he witnessed nightriding Klansmen beating blacks in the streets. How, he asked defiantly, could he heed the Christian injunction and love a race of people who hated him? In retaliation, he determined "to hate every white person."

Yes, he was angry. In sandlot games, he competed so fiercely that friends could not tell whether he was playing or fighting. He had his share of playground combat, too, and could outwrestle any of his peers. He even rebelled against his father, vowing never to become a preacher like him. Yet he liked the way Daddy King stood up to whites: he told them never to call him a boy and vowed to fight this system until he died.

Still, there was another side to M.L., a calmer, sensuous side. He played the violin, enjoyed opera, and relished soul food—fried chicken, cornbread, and collard greens with ham hocks and bacon drippings. By his mid-teens, his voice was the most memorable thing about him. It had changed into a rich and resonant baritone that commanded attention whenever he held forth. A natty dresser, nicknamed “Tweed” because of his fondness for tweed suits, he became a connoisseur of lovely young women. His little brother A.D. remembered how Martin “kept flitting from chick to chick” and was “just about the best jitterbug in town.”

AT AGE FIFTEEN, he entered Morehouse College in Atlanta, wanting somehow to help his people. He thought about becoming a lawyer and even practiced giving trial speeches before a mirror in his room. But thanks largely to Morehouse President Benjamin Mays, who showed him that the ministry could be a respectable forum for ideas, even for social protest, King decided to become a Baptist preacher after all. By the time he was ordained in 1947, his resentment toward whites had softened some, thanks to positive contact with white students on an intercollegiate council. But he hated his segregated world more than ever.

Once he had his bachelor's degree, he went north to study at Crozer Seminary near Philadelphia. In this mostly white school, with its polished corridors and quiet solemnity, King continued to ponder the plight of blacks in America. How, by what method and means, were blacks to improve their lot in a white-dominated country? His study of history, especially of Nat Turner's slave insurrection, convinced him that it was suicidal for a minority to strike back against a heavily armed majority. For him, voluntary segregation was equally unacceptable, as was accommodation to the status quo. King shuddered at such negative approaches to the race problem. How indeed were blacks to combat discrimination in a country ruled by the white majority?

As some other blacks had done, he found his answer in the teachings of Mohandas Gandhi—for young King, the discovery had the force of a conversion experience. Nonviolent resistance, Gandhi taught, meant noncooperation with evil, an idea he got from Henry David Thoreau's essay “On Civil Disobedience.” In India, Gandhi gave Thoreau's theory practical application in the form of strikes, boycotts, and protest marches, all conducted nonviolently and all predicated on love for the oppressor and a belief in divine justice. In gaining Indian independence, Gandhi sought not to defeat the British, but to redeem them through love, so as to avoid a legacy of

bitterness. Gandhi's term for this—*Satyagraha*—reconciled love and force in a single, powerful concept.

As King discovered from his studies, Gandhi had embraced nonviolence in part to subdue his own violent nature. This was a profound revelation for King, who had felt much hatred in his life, especially toward whites. Now Gandhi showed him a means of harnessing his anger and channeling it into a positive and creative force for social change.

AT THIS JUNCTURE, King found mostly theoretical satisfaction in Gandhian nonviolence; he had no plans to become a radical activist in the segregated South. Indeed, he seemed destined to a life of the mind, not of social protest. In 1951, he graduated from Crozer and went on to earn a Ph.D. in theology from Boston University, where his adviser pronounced him “a scholar's scholar” of great intellectual potential. By 1955, a year after the school desegregation decision, King had married comely Coretta Scott and assumed the pastorate of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. Immensely happy in the world of ideas, he hoped eventually to teach theology at a major university or seminary.

But, as King liked to say, the *Zeitgeist*, or spirit of the age, had other plans for him. In December 1955, Montgomery blacks launched a boycott of the city's segregated buses and chose the articulate twenty-six-year-old minister as their spokesman.* As it turned out, he was unusually well prepared to assume the kind of leadership thrust on him. Drawing on Gandhi's teachings and example, plus the tenets of his own Christian faith, King directed a nonviolent boycott designed both to end an injustice and redeem his white adversaries through love. When he exhorted blacks to love their enemies, King did not mean to love them as friends or intimates. No, he said, he meant a disinterested love in all humankind, a love that saw the neighbor in everyone it met, a love that sought to restore the beloved community. Such love not only avoided the internal violence of the spirit, but severed the external chain of hatred that only produced more hatred in an endless spiral. If American blacks could break the chain of hatred, King said, true brotherhood could begin. Then posterity would have to say that there had lived a race of people, of black people, who “injected a new meaning into the veins of history and civilization.”

During the boycott King imparted his philosophy at twice-weekly mass meetings in the black churches, where overflow crowds clapped and cried as his mellifluous voice swept over them. In these mass meetings King discovered his extraordinary power as an orator. His rich religious imagery reached deep into the black psyche, for religion had been the black people's main source of strength and survival since slavery days. His delivery was “like a narrative poem,” said a woman

*See “The Father His Children Forgot” in the December 1985 issue of *American History Illustrated*.

journalist who heard him. His voice had such depths of sincerity and empathy that it could "charm your heart right out of your body." Because he appealed to the best in his people, articulating their deepest hurts and aspirations, black folk began to idolize him; he was their Gandhi.

Under his leadership, they stood up to white Montgomery in a remarkable display of solidarity. Pitted against an obdurate city government that blamed the boycott on Communist agitation and resorted to psychological and legal warfare to break it, the blacks stayed off the buses month after month, and walked or rode in a black-operated carpool. When an elderly woman refused the offer of a ride, King asked her, "But don't your feet hurt? "Yes," she replied, "my feet is tired but my soul is rested." For King, her irrepressible spirit was proof that "a new Negro" was emerging in the South, a Negro with "a new sense of dignity and destiny."

That "new Negro" menaced white supremacists, especially the Ku Klux Klan, and they persecuted King with a vengeance. They made obscene phone calls to his home, sent him abusive, sickening letters, and once even dynamited the front of his house. Nobody was hurt, but King, fearing a race war, had to dissuade angry blacks from violent retaliation. Finally, on November 13, 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court nullified the Alabama laws that enforced segregated buses, and handed King and his boycotters a resounding moral victory. Their protest had captured the imagination of progressive people all over the world and marked the beginning of a southern black movement that would shake the segregated South to its foundations. At the forefront of that movement was a new organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), which King and other black ministers formed in 1957, with King serving as its president and guiding spirit. Operating through the southern black church, SCLC sought to enlist the black masses in the freedom struggle by expanding "the Montgomery way" across the South.

The "Miracle of Montgomery" changed King's life, catapulting him into international prominence as an inspiring new moral voice for civil rights. Across the country, blacks and whites alike wrote him letters of encouragement; *Time* magazine pictured him on its cover; the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and scores of church and civic organizations vied for his services as a speaker. "I am really disturbed how fast all this has happened to me," King told his wife. "People will expect me to perform miracles for the rest of my life."

But fame had its evil side, too. When King visited New York in 1958, a deranged black woman stabbed him in the chest with a letter opener. The weapon was

lodged so close to King's aorta, the main artery from the heart, that he would have died had he sneezed. To extract the blade, an interracial surgical team had to remove a rib and part of his breastbone; in a burst of inspiration, the lead surgeon made the incision over King's heart in the shape of a cross.

THAT HE HAD NOT DIED convinced King that God was preparing him for some larger work in the segregated South. To gain perspective on what was happening there, he made a pilgrimage to India to visit Gandhi's shrine and the sites of his "War for Independence." He returned home with an even deeper commitment to non-violence and a vow to be more humble and ascetic like Gandhi. Yet he was a man of manifold contradictions, this American Gandhi. While renouncing material things and giving nearly all of his extensive honorariums to SCLC, he liked posh hotels and zesty meals with wine, and he was always immaculately dressed in a gray or black suit, white shirt, and tie. While caring passionately for the poor, the downtrodden, and the disinherited, he had a fascination with men of affluence and enjoyed the company of wealthy SCLC benefactors. While trumpeting the glories of nonviolence and redemptive love, he could feel the most terrible anger when whites murdered a black or bombed a black church; he could contemplate giving up, turning America over to the haters of both races, only to dedicate himself anew to his nonviolent faith and his determination to redeem his country.

In 1960, he moved his family to Atlanta so that he could devote himself fulltime to SCLC, which was trying to register black voters for the upcoming federal elections. That same year, southern black students launched the sit-in movement against segregated lunch counters, and King not only helped them form the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) but raised money on their behalf.* In October he even joined a sit-in protest at an Atlanta department store and went to jail with several students on a trespassing charge. Like Thoreau, King considered jail "a badge of honor." To redeem the nation and arouse the conscience of the opponent, King explained, you go to jail and stay there. "You have broken a law which is out of line with the moral law and you are willing to suffer the consequences by serving the time."

He did not reckon, however, on the tyranny of racist officials, who clamped him in a malevolent state penitentiary, in a cell for hardened criminals. But state authorities released him when Democratic presidential nominee John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert interceded on King's behalf. According to many analysts, the episode won critical black votes for Kennedy and gave him the election in November. For King, the election demonstrated what he had long said: that one of the most significant steps a black could take was the short walk to the voting booth.

*See "The Nashville Student Movement" on pages 28-31.

Recommended additional reading: Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr. by Stephen B. Oates (Harper & Row, 1982), and A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr. edited by James M. Washington (Harper & Row, 1986).

The trouble was that most blacks in Dixie, especially in the Deep South, could not vote even if they so desired. For decades, state and local authorities had kept the mass of black folk off the voting rolls by a welter of devious obstacles and outright intimidation. Through 1961 and 1962, King exhorted President Kennedy to sponsor tough new civil rights legislation that would enfranchise southern blacks and end segregated public accommodations as well. When Kennedy shied away from a strong civil rights commitment, King and his lieutenants took matters into their own hands, orchestrating a series of southern demonstrations to show the world the brutality of segregation. At the same time, King stumped the country, drawing on all his powers of oratory to enlist the black masses and win white opinion to his cause.

Everywhere he went his message was the same. *The civil rights issue, he said, is an eternal moral issue that will determine the destiny of our nation and our world. As we seek our full rights, we hope to redeem the soul of our country. For it is our country, too, and we will win our freedom because the sacred heritage of America and the eternal will of God are embodied in our echoing demands. We do not intend to humiliate the white man, but to win him over through the strength of our love. Ultimately, we are trying to free all of us in America—Negroes from the bonds of segregation and shame, whites from the bonds of bigotry and fear.*

We stand today between two worlds—the dying old order and the emerging new. With men of ill-will greeting this change with cries of violence, of interposition and nullification, some of us may get beaten. Some of us may even get killed. But if you are cut down in a movement designed to save the soul of a nation, no other death could be more redemptive. We must realize that change does not roll in “on the wheels of inevitability,” but comes through struggle. So “let us be those creative dissenters who will call our beloved nation to a higher destiny, to a new plateau of compassion, to a more noble expression of humaneness.”

That message worked like magic among America's long-suffering blacks. Across the South, across America, they rose in unprecedented numbers to march and demonstrate with Martin Luther King. His singular achievement was that he brought the black masses into the freedom struggle for the first time. He rallied the strength of broken men and women, helping them overcome a lifetime of fear and feelings of inferiority. After segregation had taught them all their lives that they were *nobody*, King taught them that they were *somebody*. Because he made them believe in themselves and in the beauty of chosen suffering, he taught them how to straighten their backs (“a man can't ride you unless your back is bent”) and confront those who oppressed them. Through the technique of nonviolent resistance, he furnished them something no previous black leader had been able to provide. He showed them a way of controlling their pent-up anger, as he had controlled his own, and using it to bring about constructive change.

AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS



King was willing to go to jail for his belief in racial equality. He is shown here leaving the Fulton County (Georgia) Jail in handcuffs after having been convicted of a trespassing charge he incurred during participation in an October 1960 sit-in at an Atlanta department store. “You have broken a law which is out of line with the moral law,” he said in explaining his philosophy, “and you are willing to suffer the consequences by serving the time.”

THE MASS DEMONSTRATIONS King and SCLC choreographed in the South produced the strongest civil rights legislation in American history. This was the goal of King's major southern campaigns from 1963 to 1965. He would single out some notoriously segregated city with white officials prone to violence, mobilize the local blacks with songs, scripture readings, and rousing oratory in black churches, and then lead them on protest marches conspicuous for their grace and moral purpose. Then he and his aides would escalate the marches, increase their demands, even fill up the jails, until they brought about a moment of "creative tension," when whites would either agree to negotiate or resort to violence. If they did the latter, King would thus expose the brutality inherent in segregation and so stab the national conscience so that the federal government would be forced to intervene with corrective measures.

The technique succeeded brilliantly in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963. Here Police Commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor, in full view of reporters and television cameras, turned firehoses and police dogs on the marching protestors. Revolted by such ghastly scenes, stricken by King's own searching eloquence and the bravery of his unarmed followers, Washington eventually produced the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which desegregated public facilities—the thing King had demanded all along from Birmingham. Across the South, the "WHITES ONLY" signs that had hurt and enraged him since boyhood now came down.

Although SNCC and others complained that King had a Messiah complex and was trying to monopolize the civil rights movement, his technique worked with equal success in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. Building on a local movement there, King and his staff launched a drive to gain southern blacks the unobstructed right to vote. The violence he exposed in Selma—the beating of black marchers by state troopers and deputized possemen, the killing of a young black deacon and a white Unitarian minister—horried the country. When King called for support, thousands of ministers, rabbis, priests, nuns, students, lay leaders, and ordinary people—black and white alike—rushed to Selma from all over the country and stood with King in the name of human liberty. Never in the history of the movement had so many people of all faiths and classes come to the southern battleground. The Selma campaign culminated in a dramatic march over the Jefferson Davis Highway to the state capital of Montgomery. Along the way, impoverished local blacks stared incredulously at the marching, singing, flag-waving spectacle moving by. When the column reached one dusty crossroads, an elderly black woman ran out from a group of old folk, kissed King breathlessly, and ran back crying, "I done kissed him! The Martin Luther King! I done kissed the Martin Luther King!"

In Montgomery, first capital and much-heralded "cradle" of the Confederacy, King led an interracial throng of 25,000—the largest civil rights demonstration the South had ever witnessed—up Dexter Avenue with

banners waving overhead. The pageant was as ironic as it was extraordinary, for it was up Dexter Avenue that Jefferson Davis's first inaugural parade had marched, and in the portico of the capitol Davis had taken his oath of office as president of the slave-based Confederacy. Now, in the spring of 1965, Alabama blacks—most of them descendants of slaves—stood massed at the same statehouse, singing a new rendition of "We Shall Overcome," the anthem of the civil rights movement. They sang, "Deep in my heart, I do believe, We have overcome—*today*."

Then, within view of the statue of Jefferson Davis, and watched by cordons of state troopers and television cameras, King mounted a trailer. His vast audience listened, transfixed, as his words rolled and thundered over the loudspeaker: "My people, my people listen. The battle is in our hands. . . . We must come to see that the end we seek is a society at peace with itself, a society that can live with its conscience. That day will be a day not of the white man, not of the black man. That will be the day of man as man." And that day was not long in coming, King said, whereupon he launched into the immortal refrains of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," crying out, "Our God is marching on! Glory, glory hallelujah!"

Aroused by the events in Alabama, Washington produced the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which outlawed impediments to black voting and empowered the attorney general to supervise federal elections in seven southern states where blacks were kept off the rolls. At the time, political analysts almost unanimously attributed the act to King's Selma campaign. Once federal examiners were supervising voter registration in all troublesome southern areas, blacks were able to get on the rolls and vote by the hundreds of thousands, permanently altering the pattern of southern and national politics.

In the end, the powerful civil rights legislation generated by King and his tramping legions wiped out statutory racism in America and realized at least the social and political promise of emancipation a century before. But King was under no illusion that legislation alone could bring on the brave new America he so ardently championed. Yes, he said, laws and their vigorous enforcement were necessary to regulate destructive habits and actions, and to protect blacks and their rights. But laws could not eliminate the "fears, prejudice, pride, and irrationality" that were barriers to a truly integrated society, to peaceful intergroup and interpersonal living. Such a society could be achieved only when people accepted that inner, invisible law that etched on their hearts the conviction "that all men are brothers and that love is mankind's most potent weapon for personal and social transformation. True integration will be achieved by true neighbors who are willingly obedient to unenforceable obligations."

Even so, the Selma campaign was the movement's finest hour, and the Voting Rights Act the high point of a broad civil rights coalition that included the federal government, various white groups, and all the other



"On to the state capitol" is the cry as King, here flanked by Mrs. King, Dr. Ralph Bunche, and the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, officially starts the final leg of the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery civil rights march. The interracial throng of 25,000 made its way up Dexter Avenue to the Alabama state capitol, along the same route Jefferson Davis's first Confederate inaugural parade had followed more than a century before. Many observers have called the Selma campaign—which led to passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act—the civil rights movement's finest hour.

civil rights organizations in addition to SCLC. King himself had best expressed the spirit and aspirations of that coalition when, on August 28, 1963, standing before the Lincoln Memorial, he electrified an interracial crowd of 250,000 with perhaps his greatest speech, "I Have A Dream," in which he described in rhythmic, hypnotic cadences his vision of an integrated America. Because of his achievements and moral vision, he won the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize, at thirty-four the youngest recipient in Nobel history.

STILL, King paid a high price for his fame and his cause. He suffered from stomachaches and insomnia, and even felt guilty about all the tributes he received, all the popularity he enjoyed. Born in relative material comfort and given a superior education, he did not think he had earned the right to lead the impoverished black masses. He complained, too, that he no longer had a personal self and that sometimes he did not recognize the Martin Luther King people talked about. Lonely, away from home for protracted periods, beset with temptation, he slept with other women, for some of whom he had real feeling. His sexual transgressions only added to his guilt, for he knew he was imperiling his cause and hurting himself and those he loved.

Alas for King, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover found out about the black leader's infidelities. The director already abhorred King, certain that Communist spies influenced him and masterminded his demonstrations. Hoover did not think blacks capable of organizing such things, so Communists had to be behind them and King as well. As it turned out, a lawyer in King's inner circle and a man in SCLC's New York office did have Communist backgrounds, a fact that only reinforced Hoover's



On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, where he had been supporting a strike by black sanitation workers. Five days later in Atlanta, Georgia, a cortege of 50,000 mourners followed the coffin of the slain civil rights leader—borne in a farm wagon as a symbol of his identification with the poor—across town to the South View Cemetery. “I may not get there with you,” King had told an audience the evening before his death, “But I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land.”

suspicions about King. Under Hoover's orders, FBI agents conducted a ruthless crusade to destroy King's reputation and drive him broken and humiliated from public life. Hoover's men tapped King's phones and bugged his hotel rooms; they compiled a prurient monograph about his private life and showed it to various editors, public officials, and religious and civic leaders; they spread the word, Hoover's word, that King was not only a reprobate but a dangerous subversive with Communist associations.

King was scandalized and frightened by the FBI's revelations of his extramarital affairs. Luckily for him, no editor, not even a racist one in the South, would touch the FBI's salacious materials. Public officials such as Robert Kennedy were shocked, but argued that King's personal life did not affect his probity as a civil rights leader. Many blacks, too, declared that what he did in private was his own business. Even so, King vowed to refrain from further affairs—only to succumb again to his own human frailties.

As for the Communist charge, King retorted that he did not need any Russians to tell him when someone was standing on his neck; he could figure that out by himself. To mollify his political friends, however, King did banish from SCLC the two men with Communist backgrounds (later he resumed his ties with the lawyer, a loyal friend, and let Hoover be damned). He also denounced Communism in no uncertain terms. It was, he believed, profoundly and fundamentally evil, an atheistic doctrine no true Christian could ever embrace. He hated the dictatorial Soviet state, too, whose “crippling totalitarianism” subordinated everything—religion, art, music, science, and the individual—to its terrible yoke. True, Communism started with men like Karl Marx who were “afire with a passion for social justice.” Yet King faulted Marx for rejecting God and the spiritual in human life. “The great weakness in Karl Marx is right here,” King once told his staff, and he went on to describe his ideal Christian commonwealth in Hegelian terms: “Capitalism fails to realize that life is social. Marxism fails to realize that life is individual. Truth is found neither in the rugged individualism of capitalism nor in the impersonal collectivism of Communism. The kingdom of God is found in a synthesis that combines the truths of these two opposites. Now there is where I leave brother Marx and move on toward the kingdom.”

BUT HOW TO MOVE ON after Selma was a perplexing question King never successfully answered. After the devastating Watts riot in August 1965, he took his movement into the racially troubled urban North, seeking to help the suffering black poor in the ghettos. In 1966, over the fierce opposition of some of his own staff, he launched a campaign to end the black slums in Chicago and forestall rioting there. But the campaign foundered because King seemed unable to devise a coherent anti-slum strategy, because Mayor Richard Daley and his black acolytes opposed him bitterly, and because white America did not seem to care. King did lead open-housing marches into segregated neighborhoods in Chicago, only to encounter furious mobs who waved Nazi banners, threw bottles and bricks, and screamed, “We hate niggers!” “Kill the niggers!” “We want Martin Luther Coon!” King was shocked. “I’ve been in many demonstrations all across the South,” he told reporters, “but I can say that I have never seen—even in Mississippi and Alabama—mobs as hostile and as hate-filled as I’ve seen in Chicago.” Although King prevented a major riot there and wrung important concessions from City Hall, the slums remained, as wretched and seemingly unsolvable as ever.

That same year, angry young militants in SNCC and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) renounced King's teachings—they were sick and tired of “De Lawd” telling them to love white people and work for integration. Now they advocated “Black Power,” black separatism, even violent resistance to liberate blacks in America. SNCC even banished whites from its ranks and went on to drop “nonviolent” from its name and to lobby against civil rights legislation.

Black Power repelled the older, more conservative black organizations such as the NAACP and the Urban League, and fragmented the civil rights movement beyond repair. King, too, argued that black separatism was chimerical, even suicidal, and that nonviolence remained the only workable way for black people. “Darkness cannot drive out darkness,” he reasoned: “only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.” If every other black in America turned to violence, King warned, then he would still remain the lone voice preaching that it was wrong. Nor was SCLC going to reject whites as SNCC had done. “There have been too many hymns of hope,” King said, “too many anthems of expectation, too many deaths, too many dark days of standing over graves of those who fought for integration for us to turn back now. We must still sing ‘Black and White Together, We Shall Overcome.’”

In 1967, King himself broke with the older black organizations over the ever-widening war in Vietnam. He had first objected to American escalation in the summer of 1965, arguing that the Nobel Peace Prize and his role as a Christian minister compelled him to speak out for peace. Two years later, with almost a half-million Americans—a disproportionate number of them poor blacks—fighting in Vietnam, King devoted whole

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The Nashville Student Movement

by David E. Sumner

ONE AFTERNOON in 1960, a waitress working the lunch counter at a Nashville department store noticed a group of young blacks awaiting service. She moved toward them, intending to discourage them. "I'm sorry, but we don't serve Negroes here," she told them.

"That's all right," was the reply. "We don't eat them either."

Earlier that year, on February 1, 1960, four black freshmen from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College had started a sit-in at an F.W. Woolworth store in Greensboro. First, Joseph McNeil had purchased a tube of toothpaste and Franklin McCain had bought some school supplies. They and two friends then sat down at the lunch counter and ordered coffee.

The white waitress working there had responded in a manner similar to the Nashville waitress.

"I beg your pardon," McCain replied. "You just served me at a counter two feet away. Why is it that you serve me at one counter and deny me at another?"

The four students remained there, without the coffee they had ordered, for half an hour—until the store closed at 5:30 P.M.

This was the beginning of a wave of lunch counter sit-ins at department stores throughout the South. Within two weeks of the first protest in Greensboro, the sit-ins spread to Durham, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, Raleigh, Fayetteville, and Elizabeth City, North Carolina, and to Nashville, Tennessee. A sit-in first occurred in Nashville on February 13, and it was the start of a series of protests that would continue there over the next three months.

With Nashville's twelve colleges and universities, including four black institutions (Fisk University, Tennessee A & T University (now Tennessee State), the American Baptist Seminary, and Meharry Medical College), the city had long billed itself the "Athens of the South." Although the students at the four black schools provided plenty of business for the downtown merchants, they found no place where they were allowed to eat when they went there to shop.

The Nashville sit-ins, chronicled on the 1986 PBS Series *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years*, were organized to change this inequity. They were planned and carried out by the Nashville Student Movement, an organization of students from the city's four black schools. Diane Nash, John Lewis, and Marion Barry (then a Fisk graduate student and now mayor of Washington, D.C.), were key leaders of the group.

For the previous eighteen months, Nash, Lewis, and others had attended a series of workshops on nonviolent philosophy and protest techniques. James M. Lawson, Jr., a thirty-two-year-old black who attended Vanderbilt Divinity School, had led the workshops. The group had studied the life and work of Mohandas Gandhi and the two major influences on him: Christianity and Henry David Thoreau's essay "On Civil Disobedience."

The students eventually elected Nash, a Fisk University junior from Chicago, to head the Nashville Student Movement's central committee. The students agreed that they would later work to integrate movie theaters, other restaurants, and libraries, but that the first goal of the Nashville Student Movement would be to integrate lunch counters.

The first attempt to achieve this goal was made at about 12:20 P.M. on February 13, when an estimated one hundred students—about ninety of them black—walked into the Woolworth's, Kress, and McClellan stores in Nashville and asked to be served. After the waitresses refused service, the students sat at the counters for two hours—some reading books, others doing schoolwork or talking quietly.

"The first sit-in we had was really funny," Diane Nash later recalled. "The waitresses were nervous. They must have dropped \$2,000 worth of dishes that day . . . It was almost like a cartoon. We were sitting there trying not to laugh [but] at the same time we were scared to death."

Paul Lapard, a white Fisk student in the group, said the waitresses and managers at each store "were courteous, but not particularly nice."

Instructions mimeographed for the demonstrators carried these directives:

- DO show yourself friendly at the counter at all times.
- DO sit straight and always face the counter.
- DO refer all information to your leader in a polite manner.
- DO remember the teachings of Jesus Christ, Mohandas K. Gandhi, and Martin Luther King.
- DON'T strike back, or curse back, if attacked.
- DON'T laugh out.
- DON'T hold conversations with the floor-walkers.
- DON'T leave your seat until your leader has given you permission.
- DON'T block entrances to the stores and the aisles.
- Remember love and non-violence, may God bless each of you.



The lunch counter sit-ins staged by the Nashville Student Movement in 1960 were in the vanguard of a series of similar protests across the South. The demonstrations, such as one held at a Kress store in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on May 12 (above), were conducted in a nonviolent manner. Despite their peaceful methods, however, protestors were sometimes arrested by local officials, as were these Chattanooga students. They were charged with breaking a 1958 anti-loitering ordinance.

A week later, on February 18, more than two hundred students braved the snow and slush of a winter storm to stage a sit-in at four downtown stores, including Grant's and the three occupied earlier. Once again the waitresses refused to serve the black students, and the managers closed the lunch counters to further business.

Two days later, 350 students staged another sit-in at these stores and Walgreen's, but after several hours the police ordered them to leave. Luther Harris, a Fisk University student who acted as a spokesman for the group, told reporters that the students were committed to nonviolent resistance. "As long as we obey these

[Gandhi's] principles, we are bound to succeed," he said. "It took Gandhi thirty-six years in India, but I don't think it will take that long here."

The fourth sit-in, held on February 27, marked the first arrests and violence. About seventy-five students were arrested on disorderly conduct charges. "We asked them eight or ten times to leave," said one police officer at the time. "They won't, so we're pulling them in."

ALTHOUGH THE STUDENTS were committed to non-violence, the onlookers sometimes were not. A white man attacked a black demonstrator at the McClellan's store after getting no reaction when he repeatedly blew cigar smoke into the student's face. White youths attacked two demonstrators at Woolworth's after receiving no response from taunts such as, "Go home, nigger." In another incident, a white youth attacked a white student protestor after calling him a "nigger lover." None of the whites involved were arrested by police.

During the next several weeks the demonstrators were tried and convicted on the disorderly conduct charges. Most voluntarily went to jail instead of posting bond or paying fines. The legal issues in the arrests

became complex, but the students were well-represented by more than a dozen black attorneys who volunteered their help. The city's black community rallied behind the students by raising money to aid their legal support. The demonstrators' chief ally and leader was Z. Alexander Looby, a prominent local attorney and the only black member of the Nashville City Council.

A fifth episode occurred on March 2 when more than 350 students staged sit-ins at the downtown stores as well as at the Greyhound and Trailways bus terminals. Sixty-three students at the bus terminals were arrested for violating the city's code on disorderly conduct as well as the state code on "conspiracy to obstruct trade and commerce."

Nashville Mayor Ben West subsequently appointed a biracial committee to explore possible solutions to the city's racial problems. Among the committee members were two blacks, the presidents of Fisk and Tennessee A & T universities. C. Madison Sarratt, vice chancellor emeritus of Vanderbilt University, was named chairman.

Both black and white leaders urged the students to discontinue the sit-ins while the committee met and sought solutions. The protestors complied, and for the next three weeks there were no sit-ins. City legal officials also delayed the trials and prosecutions of the arrested students.

During the interim, however, the students experienced a small victory. On March 16, Nash and three other black students were served at the Greyhound Post House restaurant. Bus terminal officials withheld comment about the change in policy, but restaurant manager Hilda Nichols said she had been given orders to serve the students because of "this ICC thing." What she was referring to was the 1955 Interstate Commerce Commission ruling that restaurant facilities in interstate terminals must be integrated. As a result, the Nashville railroad station and the airport restaurants had already been integrated.

But little apparent progress was being made by the biracial committee. Consequently, on March 25 more than one hundred students resumed sit-ins at downtown stores. The demonstrators carried copies of a prepared statement that explained the reason for the resumption of demonstrations: "After three weeks the hope of many has grown dull," it read. "There are few signs that the mayor's biracial committee can expect the genuineness of certain merchants. We have no choice but to again witness in a dramatic yet loving

fashion."

The students were prepared to continue the protest with the same resolve with which they had begun. On March 30 about two hundred black students and supporters gathered on the courthouse steps and prayed for Mayor Ben West to help them in their cause. "We cannot but voice disappointment that in this city orderly young people have been arrested on a charge of disorderly conduct," a prepared statement read. "We appeal to the conscience of the mayor to speak out against this misuse of otherwise useful law." The students had gathered directly under Mayor West's window, but he never appeared or answered the group.

Meanwhile, the students and the black community had begun a boycott of the downtown merchants. Until this time Nashville blacks had spent a reported \$10 million a year in downtown stores. But when a black leader at a Pleasant Green Missionary Baptist Church meeting on April 4 asked the congregation, "If there is anybody here who has not spent any money downtown in the last two weeks, stand up," almost everybody in the auditorium stood.

ON APRIL 5 the mayor's biracial committee issued its report. It recommended partial integration of the lunch counters—one section to be integrated and another segregated—for a trial period of ninety days. The committee also suggested that pending legal charges against 147 demonstrators be dropped if the trial period proved successful.

Although black leaders made no immediate public comment on the committee report, many protestors were disappointed and angry. The students had declared earlier that they would not accept any "partial" integration of the lunch counters. "We are not on trial," another student asserted. "What we ask are our rights as human beings."

Rather than taking further public action, the students now initiated direct negotiations with the merchants. The Reverend Kelly Miller Smith, a local Baptist pastor who aided the students, explained, "The mayor's committee said there was a gap, a chasm, between what we asked and what was given. We want to see if we can bridge that gap with the merchants." The first meeting was held April 7.

But before any resolution to the situation could be reached, a bomb was thrown from a passing automobile into the home of Looby, the sixty-two-year-old city council member and NAACP leader who was the

key figure in the students' legal battles. The bombing occurred about 5:30 A.M. on April 19, wrecking Loo-by's home, severely damaging an adjoining residence, and shattering windows in other nearby houses.

That bombing—intended to thwart the students' efforts—mobilized thousands of blacks and white supporters. Around noon the same day, some three thousand people marched from Fisk University to the courthouse in the largest demonstration of the city's continuing lunch counter saga. The march was conducted in complete silence, with participants walking three abreast in what seemed to be an endless line.

Black leaders confronted Mayor West on the courthouse steps. The Reverend C.T. Vivian read a prepared statement issued jointly by the Nashville Christian Leadership Council and the Nashville Student Movement. It accused West of ignoring the moral issues involved in segregation, of refusing to speak out against the biracial committee's segregation recommendation, of not using the moral weight of his office, and of encouraging violence by "his lack of decision."

Reverend Vivian opened the dialogue, asking the mayor if segregation was moral.

"No," the mayor said. "It is wrong and immoral to discriminate."

Then Nash asked West to use the prestige of his office "to appeal to all citizens to stop racial discrimination."

West answered, "I appeal to all citizens to end discrimination, to have no bigotry, no bias, no hatred."

"Do you mean that to include lunch counters?" Nash questioned further.

West answered, "Yes," turned slightly and added, "That's up to the store managers, of course."

The next morning, a two-inch headline in the *Nashville Tennessean* read: "INTEGRATE COUNTERS—MAYOR."

During the next three weeks, the newspapers reported virtually nothing more on the volatile issue. Students, too, refrained from further sit-ins and demonstrations. The city was quiet.

But the organization and planning that had brought about the sit-ins and had attracted attention to the integration issue were not forgotten. When Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke in Nashville on April 20, the civil rights leader praised the Nashville initiative as "the best organized and most disciplined in the Southland." He emphasized that Nashville students had "gained a better understanding of the philosophy of the movement than any other group." Later, the Stu-

dent Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a civil rights organization, would grow out of the sit-in groups, and several Nashville Student Movement leaders would become important figures in SNCC.

Meanwhile, direct negotiations between the merchants and the students continued. And on May 10, black students were served for the first time at downtown counters, quietly and without incident. The following day the *Tennessean* reported in a nine-paragraph story on page 7 that "Six Lunch Counters Here Serve Negroes." The next day, the same newspaper reported in a shorter story that students were served "for the second day without incident" at six downtown department stores. "The counters were opened to the Negroes," the article read, "under an agreement worked out between Negro civic leaders and the merchants."

SOME TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS after Nashville's lunch counters were integrated, Greenfield Pitts, treasurer of Harvey's in 1960 and now vice president, said of the pre-sit-in era, "We did sell them [blacks] everything else, but we didn't feed them, which didn't make sense."

At the time of the sit-ins Pitts had also been chairman of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce retail merchants division and a leader in the negotiations with the students. "We had a deal," he recalled of the demonstrations. "They [the students] would only send in a token number at given times during the day. We got the newspapers not to run anything [that day] and then only to report briefly on the back pages the next day."

Furthermore, Pitts said, "No one was to claim any statements of victory. Everything was to be done low-key and peacefully."

The integration of store lunch counters did not end Nashville's racial problems; in subsequent years the city's residents and officials had to contend with further integration of schools, other restaurants, theaters, and public facilities. For the moment, however, the students had taken "one small step."

"It was the students," Pitts said in recalling how the sit-in movement succeeded. "They were the ones who did it." ★

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Defining the Presidency

by John E. Ferling

As he took the oath of office as president of the United States on April 30, 1789, George Washington stood on the threshold of a term of political decision-making that would shape the office of the chief executive and profoundly affect future generations of American political and constitutional leaders. For, although the Constitution had broadly outlined the powers of the president, the first man to occupy that office would be held accountable for establishing many precedents regarding specific governing duties, social conduct, and relationships with other branches of government. The essay on the following pages, drawn from a major new biography of Washington, follows the “first of men” through these first crucial months as national leader.

IF GEORGE WASHINGTON sensed that change was in the air in the 1780s he did not record those thoughts. Of course, he was aware of the changes that he had helped to make. British authority, with its titled aristocracy, its class prerogatives, its royal governors and other "lordly masters," not to mention its convenient commercial ties and its generous subsidies, was gone, and with it had gone about 250,000 inhabitants of America who had chosen to remain loyal to the Crown. From the sidelines he had watched as other changes occurred. Every northern state had taken steps to abolish slavery, and all thirteen states had elected to stop the importation of African slaves. There were written constitutions and more elected officials than ever before, and the legislatures were more broadly representative than in the Colonial days. Now, too, there was a new national government. Upon its success, Washington believed, hung the fate both of the American political union and the American Revolution.

Momentous as were these changes, there remained a sense of continuity with the past, so much so in fact that contemporaries at times seemed almost ready to shrug off the departures ushered in by the Revolution. During his ride from Mount Vernon to New York, for instance, much of what Washington glimpsed must have appeared as it had thirty-five years before when he first rode along this very route. Today change is so pervasive, so continuous, that a period of thirty-five years seems almost a millennium, a period during which customs and popular culture and society's artifacts can be altered and extirpated many times over. But for Washington and his contemporaries the hum of daily life must have seemed unchanged. In 1789, for example, the means of land travel remained what it had been all his life: people and things moved by horseback or horse-drawn carriage—a slow, wearying transit across dusty (or muddy or frozen) country roads, fording rivers and streams by ferry, or by rustic, hazardous wooden bridges.

Nor had men's and women's clothing fashions changed substantially in the course of Washington's fifty-seven years. The dances and amusements that he first had enjoyed three decades earlier were no less popular in 1789, and they remained unchallenged by new conventions. Newspapers and pamphlets and books looked no different than at mid-century, furniture styles had hardly changed, and the architecture of the newly erected houses and buildings that Washington gazed upon as he passed through Baltimore and Wilmington and Philadelphia in 1789 still resembled the forms used in edifices constructed decades before. People's day-to-day lives, from the moment they rose at dawn until they

snuffed out the evening's last candle upon returning to bed, seemed to vary little from year to year.

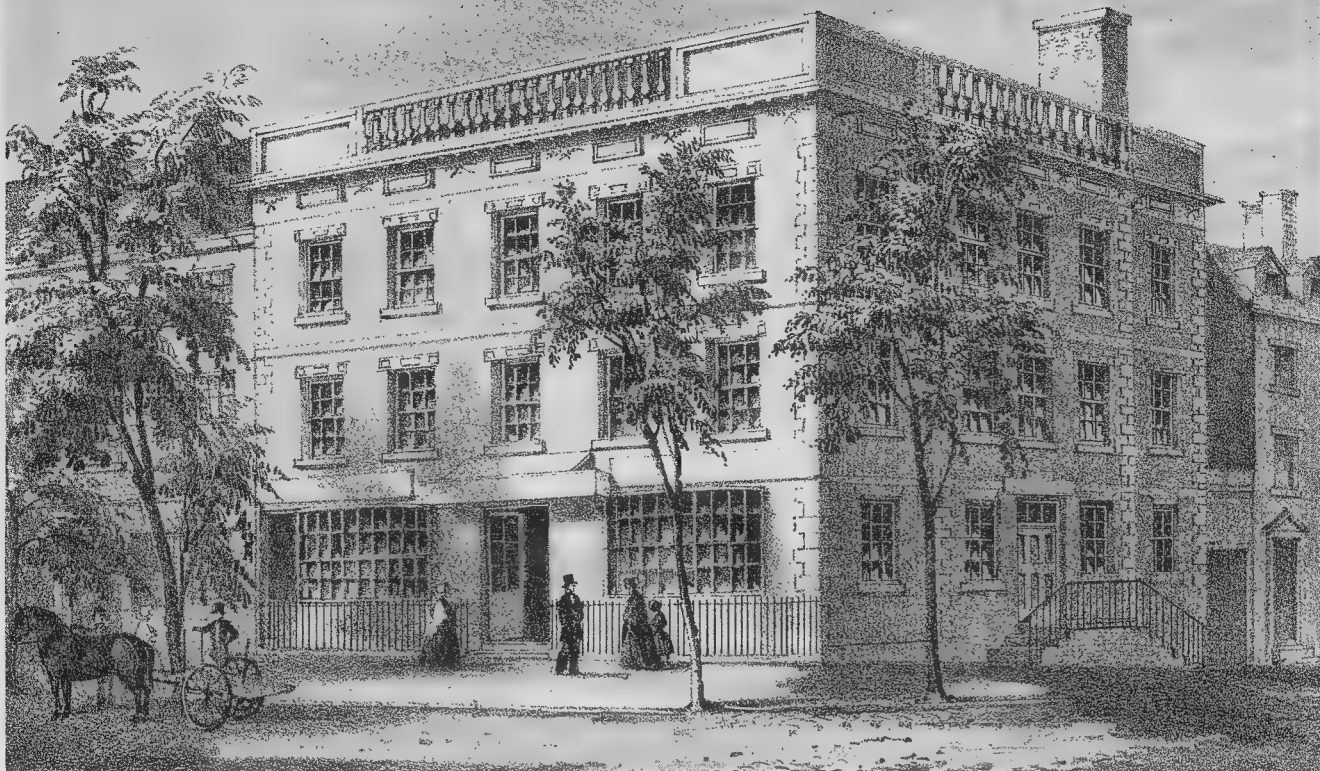
Nor had conditions abroad seemed to change appreciably since the end of the War for Independence. George III was still the king of England, though he was so plagued by mental disorders that until a few weeks before Washington's inauguration he had to be confined in a straitjacket. A Pitt—William Pitt the Younger—again was the prime minister in London, and Lord Cornwallis, Washington's victim at Yorktown, had risen to be governor general of Britain's dominion in India. Prussia and Austria still were preoccupied with Poland, the hapless nation they initially had partitioned in the year when the Continental Congress first met; and Russia once again was at war with Turkey. Moreover, for all the negotiating and all the killing of the last three decades, the French and Spanish empires looked about as they had since 1763.

But on that April 30 when Washington's simple little inaugural took place, the western world was on the threshold of great change. Already French legislators were gathering at Versailles for the opening session of the Estates-General, the first time the nation's parliament had met since 1614; within weeks that body would set in motion events that would forever alter the political face of Europe. Yet an even greater transformation already had begun, a process that has been termed a "deep change," a course of modernization that in the next few decades would modify virtually every aspect of the world that Washington knew, from the size of its families to its understanding of technology to the environment in which people lived and worked, until, finally, in its wake, the eighteenth century would come to seem but a relic of some enigmatic, ancient past. Ironically, however, while Washington's administration came at the tag end of a dying age, the decisions it made would have an enormous impact on the destiny of America's political future, leaving virtually every subsequent generation of the nation's political and constitutional leaders in its debt.

WASHINGTON HAD taken up residence in a newly furnished house on New York's East Side—a privately owned dwelling that had been a home to the last several presidents of Congress. Built on the eve of the Revolution by a prosperous merchant, it was large and comfortable, and situated just a block from the East River, so that on warm summer evenings its occupants delighted in the pleasingly cool breezes that swept in from the waters. New York City was still rebuilding from the war years, during which two disastrous fires and a seven-year occupation by the British army beset the metropolis. Yet the place bore the earmarks of prosperity. Its inhabitants now numbered between twenty-five and thirty thousand. New streets were being laid out to handle the population surge (up about 20 percent in fifteen years), and new street lamps were being installed everywhere.

For a time Washington had toyed with the notion of

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“No. 1 Cherry Street” (above) was President Washington’s New York City address during the first session of the first Congress. The house was owned by Samuel Osgood of Massachusetts, later appointed postmaster general of the United States. Located just a block from the East River, the dwelling had served as home for several presidents of Congress. But after less than a year in office, Washington moved to the Macomb House on Broadway, appropriately described as the “grandest” house in America.

holding the presidency only briefly, perhaps for a year or two. Once the new government was established, once it had a revenue and was functioning in an orderly manner, he would step aside; John Adams and others then could have the task of continuing what he had begun. The thought was not an idle pipe dream. Such a step would have been fully in keeping with Washington’s psychological pattern, for he once again would have acted out the Cincinnatus role that he cherished. Having laid aside his plow in order to save the public from chaos, he would return to his farm, although not before he had endured what seemed to be great personal sacrifice. It was, as Garry Wills has observed, a notion that amounted to a secular variation of the concept of divine intervention.

His first weeks in office must have convinced him of the wisdom of early resignation. He soon seemed to harbor doubts about his ability to perform his job. “I greatly apprehend that my Countrymen will expect too

much from me,” he confided. “I feel an insuperable diffidence in my own abilities,” he added, and he admitted his fear that the public’s “extravagant [sic] . . . praises” would be turned into “extravagant [sic] . . . censures.” Suddenly he was seized by the same anxiety that had accompanied him on the ride from Philadelphia to the siege lines at Cambridge in 1775. He feared that from the day of his inauguration he had been courting “my fall, and the ruin of my reputation.”

Washington’s concern in part was triggered by the sudden onslaught of office seekers that hammered at his front door. This was a new experience for him. During the Revolution, Congress had appointed the general officers beneath him, and, in turn, the states had named the lesser field officers. Now Washington bore the responsibility of filling the important offices. Facing the supplicants was a “delicate,” “unpleasing,” even an embarrassing task, he thought. It also was a losing proposition. Even though he acted without partiality in most instances, those who were rebuffed were certain to be angry.

The president also was troubled over the proper style required by his new office. He had sufficient military experience before 1775 so that the manner of his conduct as commander had not vexed him. But how should he comport himself as president? What suited the office? What did a republican people desire? Aware that his actions would become a model for those who followed, and wishing to be certain that “these precedents may be fixed on true principles,” he sought the advice of those about him, in particular the vice president, but

especially Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, the triumvirate responsible for the *Federalist* essays in defense of the new Constitution.

Washington bombarded them with questions. Should he seclude himself from the public? How often should he meet the public? Should he open his office for business at 8:00 A.M. each day? Should he periodically dine with members of the Congress? Should he host state dinners? Would it be improper for him to call upon private acquaintances? Should he make a tour of the United States? In short, was he to shape the presidency in the image of a monarchical court, or should this become a more popular office? Or should the office be sculpted into something in between those two poles?

Not surprisingly, considering that Hamilton regarded the British government as the world's best, he recommended that the office be shrouded at once with a royal "dignity," a feat to be accomplished by distancing the president from his subjects. Only department chiefs, diplomats, and members of the Senate, he counseled, should be privileged to have free access to the chief executive. Otherwise, "Your Excellency," as he now referred to Washington, might conduct a "levee" no more than once each week, and then he should admit only invited guests; the president, moreover, should appear at these sessions for exactly thirty minutes, no more and no less, and he should be careful to speak in the most concise manner. Up to four annual state dinners would be acceptable, Hamilton went on, but the president must never call on anyone, nor should he submit to being entertained by anyone.

Vice President Adams wished for a "dignified and respectable government." Shortly he would campaign in the Senate to impose a pompous, officious title upon the presidency, yet his recommendations were less stiff than those of Hamilton. Despite the suspicions of many contemporaries that he longed to establish aristocratic institutions in America, including rule by a monarch, Adams envisioned a genuinely republican presidency, one that the people could esteem because they would realize that the officeholder was, like themselves, a citizen. He thought two levees per week would be acceptable, and, more importantly, he proposed that these gatherings should be more or less open to the general public. He evidently thought it too republican for the president to give large and formal dinners, and he told Washington that he should feel free to entertain and to call upon whomever he pleased. Whatever Madison and Jay advised—their suggestions have been lost—it is clear that President Washington blended the proposals of Hamilton and Adams.

Already Washington had decided that he would accept what he quaintly called "visits of compliment" on only two afternoons each week, and then for just an hour at a time. And he had decided not to venture from his abode to be a dinner guest at any private residence. Otherwise, he would hold a levee for suitably dressed males during one hour every Tuesday afternoon, a public tea party for both sexes each Friday night, and a

small dinner—by invitation only—at 4:00 P.M. each Wednesday.

A creature of habit, President Washington would hardly alter this ritual during the next eight years. If his taste was starchy and sober, and if his levees soon were seen by some as unrepugnant, aristocratic affairs, Congress at least stripped away some of the marble veneer that seemed about to encase the presidency. While Washington fretted over style, the legislators, as if they had nothing better to do, squandered several days in debate over the best title for the occupant of the office. They kicked around everything from "Honourable" to "His Elective Highness" (or "Majesty") to the unctuous-sounding mouthful that John Adams fancied, "His Highness the President of the United States and Protector of the Rights of the Same." Finally, thanks in large measure to the obstinacy of a few former Anti-Federalists such as Patrick Henry, the legislators decided on the exquisitely simple denomination: "The President of the United States."

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER was that Washington had more time on his hands during the first several weeks of his tenure than has any subsequent chief executive. Congress was busy (it is equally doubtful that any of its successors ever was confronted by so many major decisions in such a brief time), but Washington largely chose not to become involved. As he was neither a lawyer nor a political philosopher, he was unsure of his relationship with Congress. The Constitution gave him a veto and administrative responsibilities; otherwise its provisions were murky. He could draw on his recollection of how a succession of Virginia's governors had acted toward the Burgesses, or his own relationship with Congress during the war might serve him as a model. Yet no previous relation really offered much guidance. Washington knew that he clearly possessed the constitutional power to initiate United States foreign policy, but there was no one with whom to work, no foreign minister, no ministers abroad. (Thomas Jefferson, minister to France since 1784, had been granted leave to return to America; otherwise, the United States had only a *chargé d'affaires* in Madrid.) Nor had the federal departments or the national judiciary been created.

So he simply waited, in the interim gradually meeting with office seekers and piecing together his clerical staff, naming about one-third as many secretaries as he had utilized a year or two into the war. With so little to do, the president must have been delighted when newly appointed aide Robert Lewis arrived, for alighting from the carriage with him, garbed in homespun as Washington himself had been when he had taken office, was the First Lady. After six weeks alone, and forced to entertain both officials and curiosity seekers by himself, Washington must have found Martha's presence especially welcome.

It was late summer before Congress created the federal departments and the court system, at last giving the new chief executive something with which to work. Ac-

tually Congress's delay probably was fortuitous, inasmuch as for several weeks that summer Washington was ill and unable to work. He fell sick in mid-June, stricken with an ailment that many feared might be fatal. A couple of weeks after his wife's arrival, Washington felt indisposed and began to run a high fever; within two or three days a slight pain developed in his thigh, and in another day or two a growth was discernable at the site of the discomfort.

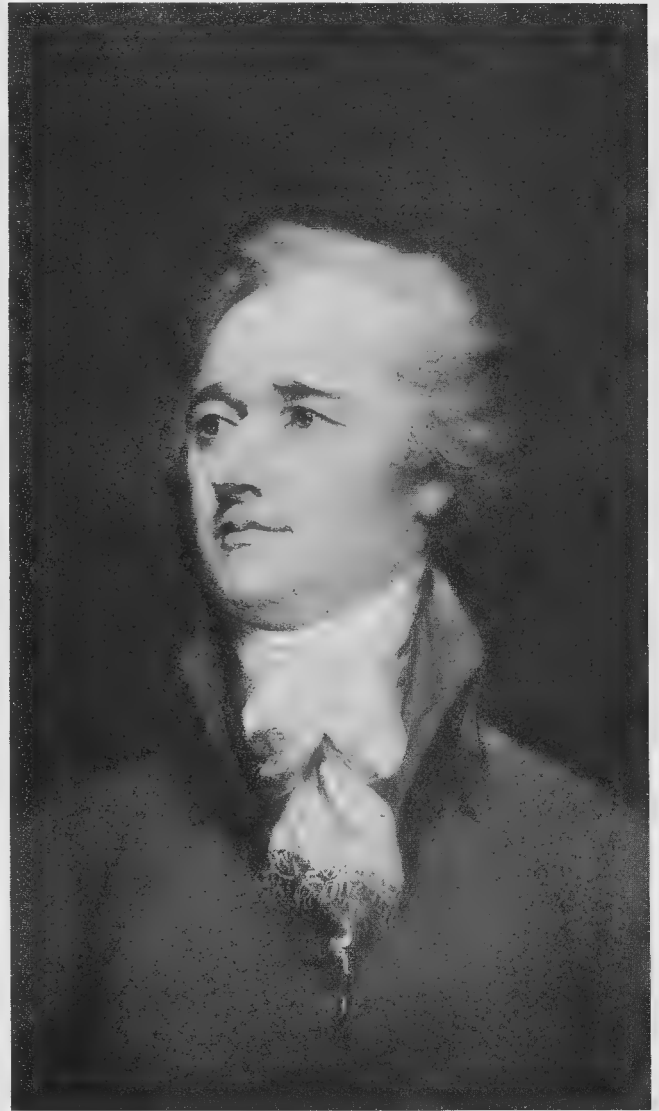
A leading New York physician was called in, but he only watched the tumor grow, until Washington referred to it as "very large." Unable to move without considerable distress, he was forced to bed and compelled by the pain to spend each day lying only on his right side; his sickness exacerbated by anxiety, Washington seemed to be dangerously ill. Suspicions grew that he was a victim of cancer; rumor also coursed through the capital that he had an anthrax infection, what contemporaries called the "wool sorters disease." While his doctors debated as to what steps to take, Cherry Street was blocked to traffic to spare the president its distressing noise.

Then, suddenly, the growth abscessed and the doctor lanced and drained the lesion. Ever so gradually Washington's strength returned. Two weeks following the surgery Washington complained that "a feebleness still hangs upon me," and for a month much of his correspondence was handled by his secretaries. Almost seven weeks elapsed from the moment of the onset of the earliest symptoms until he finally, fully, resumed his duties, although even then he still was compelled to spend much of his time reclining on soft pillows as he worked. Three months later the still-recumbent chief executive wrote his old friend Dr. James Craik that the "wound given by the incision is not yet closed." Even then the tumescent growth remained the size of a barley corn.

WHILE WASHINGTON languished on his sickbed, Congress painstakingly created three executive departments—State, War, and Treasury—and two federal agencies with less exalted status, the offices of attorney general and postmaster general. And by early autumn a national court system was established, as Congress fashioned thirteen district courts as the "inferior tribunals" beneath the six-member Supreme Court. At last Washington had some places to put a few of the horde of office seekers who had been inveigling appointments from him since even before he left Mount Vernon. Indeed, he had more than one thousand posts to fill.

The tough part was turning down men with whom he had long been close. Financially pressed Benjamin Lincoln, a former general in the Continental Army, sought to head a department, but, instead, Washington sent him to Georgia to help negotiate a treaty normalizing relations with the Creek Indians. The president's nephew, Bushrod Washington, longed to be appointed United States district attorney for Virginia; Washington refused, telling him bluntly that his "standing at the

ALEXANDER HAMILTON BY JOHN TRUMBULL (1792), COURTESY OF THE YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY



Washington regarded the selection of secretary of the treasury as the most crucial appointment he would make during his first year in office; the man occupying this pivotal post would have to possess both financial knowledge and political acumen. His choice was the brilliant New Yorker Alexander Hamilton (above), who, in turn, had obviously thought Washington the perfect man to hold the nation's highest office. When he had feared the Virginian would decline to become the first president, Hamilton had written him an emphatic, assertive letter persuading Washington to accept.

bar” would not justify his nomination. By contrast, picking the key men was easy. Washington intended to select men he knew and trusted, and for the most part he planned to choose only from among those who had been demonstrable advocates of the new Constitution.

The War Department was easiest. Henry Knox, a former army general and organizer of the Society of the Cincinnati, had been the last director of this jurisdiction under the Articles of Confederation, and though the department technically ceased to exist with the ratification of the new Constitution, Washington had asked him to continue in the interim. To no one's great surprise the president designated his loyal general as the initial director of military matters.

Nor was it particularly startling when Alexander Hamilton was offered the post of secretary of the treasury. That brilliant young New Yorker had been busy since the day at Yorktown when he had persuaded his leader to permit him to lead an assault on the redcoats' lines. Shortly after Cornwallis's surrender he had left the army, returning to New York and gaining admittance to the bar—after but three months' study. Soon thereafter he was elected to Congress.

Immediately after the war Hamilton had no longer seemed to have time for Washington, as if the old general at Mount Vernon was unlikely ever again to serve as his “aegis” to bigger and better things. For three years the two men had almost no contact; Hamilton did not even visit Mount Vernon when he attended the Annapolis Convention in 1786, and he wrote to Washington only twice during those years, once to transmit some data from a New York business that might have been relevant to the general's wartime expense account and once to discuss the Order of the Cincinnati.

The campaign to strengthen the national government, as well as his leading role in the creation of the Bank of New York, thrust Hamilton back into public affairs, leading first to his election to the New York legislature in 1786 and subsequently to his important role in drafting and ratifying the Constitution. His latter activities made him the indispensable leader of his state's Federalist faction. He also spent some of his time after early 1787 cozying up to Washington again. In the year that followed the Constitutional Convention he wrote three times as many letters to his former benefactor as he had in the three years preceding the Philadelphia meeting. One missive was dispatched for the purpose of requesting that Washington assist him in refuting public charges that he had “*palmed* myself upon you.” Washington obliged him.

In Washington's mind the Treasury Department was the key post, at least until the new government was secured. The nation's revenue problems had served as the catalyst that had activated many bystanders to think of a new constitution; moreover, the president knew that the new government's very ability to survive hinged on the success of this department. The secretary must be a wily politician, for money matters were certain to divide men; shepherding revenue bills through Congress might

be as difficult as pushing that proverbial camel through the eye of a needle. Although Washington never divulged his reasons for selecting Hamilton, that young man obviously seemed to fit every requirement for the job. Not only was he experienced in the boggy landscape of finance, but Washington explicitly trusted his acumen, having already turned to him for advice concerning accepting the presidency and the style he should set for the office. Furthermore, there could be no doubt that the New Yorker was unrivaled in guile and political dexterity. Thus, less than a week after the department was created, and without bothering to seek any advice, Washington nominated Hamilton.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT was the next most important office. In fact, if Hamilton quickly resolved the national government's financial ills, State in the long run would be the principal office. Washington initially leaned toward John Jay, the last head of foreign affairs under the Articles, but Jay longed for the Supreme Court, and the president acceded to his wishes. The next offer was extended to Thomas Jefferson. It was a logical move. Not only did Washington know him, but few men had as much diplomatic experience.

Jefferson would be unaware of his nomination until he disembarked in Norfolk in November 1789 at the completion of a four-year stretch as the United States minister to France. Obviously he was well versed in the affairs of that important nation, a country that Washington now knew was experiencing the “first paroxysm”—and probably not the last—of a great revolution.

Washington named Samuel Osgood of Massachusetts (the owner of the president's Cherry Street residence) as his postmaster general. Edmund Randolph, who had introduced the Virginia Plan at the Constitutional Convention, was nominated to be attorney general. After Jay was nominated as chief justice of the United States, Washington sent the Senate the names of five men to be considered for the remaining seats on the High Court. He was close to three of the five: James Wilson, an old loyal supporter from Pennsylvania; fellow Virginian John Blair; and his former wartime aide Robert Harrison. John Rutledge of South Carolina and William Cushing of Massachusetts also were named, and a few weeks later when Harrison declined the post (he was ill, and died early in 1790), Washington nominated James Iredell of North Carolina.

Even though dispirited from his surgery, to which in September was added the melancholy news of his mother's death, President Washington continued to wrestle with the long list of appointments yet to be made. By early fall he had filled nearly 125 vacant offices, ranging in importance from federal judgeships to ministerial posts to fairly trifling provincial postal offices. The more weighty selections were consented to by the Senate with little fanfare, but the president was flabbergasted to learn that his appointee for naval officer of the port of Savannah was rejected; Georgia's two senators ob-



As America's first president, George Washington faced a dilemma with regard to determining an appropriate social style. As a head of state, a certain amount of "pomp and circumstance" was required of him, but too much ceremony and opulent display would invite comparisons to European royalty. Besides holding levees (at which Washington formally met visitors, bowing to all, but shaking hands with none) and official state dinners, the Washingtons held open house for callers on Friday evenings. As is suggested in the 1876 painting (above) by Daniel Huntington, Martha Washington presided over these events. "Lady Washington," as she was sometimes called, is shown here standing on the dias at left. (John Jay, John Adams, and Alexander Hamilton are on her right; Thomas Jefferson and George Washington stand to Martha's left. In the foreground, seen in profile, is Mrs. John Jay.)

jected, and their colleagues in Federal Hall fell in step to thwart Washington. Their action established the precedent that came to be known as "senatorial courtesy," a practice that in reality virtually entrusted minor local appointments to each state's two senators.

During that initial session of Congress, one additional item of business occupied the legislators. Nine states had ratified the Constitution with the understanding that a bill of rights soon would be amended to that charter, and, in fact, more than two hundred amendments containing about eighty substantive changes had been

proposed by the ratifying conventions. Principally the Anti-Federalists had feared that a strong central government might encroach on individual liberties, although some feared that the Constitution might bestow rights on some folk whose liberties presently were restrained; hence one New England state longed for an emendation that would prevent "Jews, Turks and infidels" from holding office. Clearly Congress had to do something. In fact, the Federalist leadership was anxious to act hurriedly, if for no other reason than to head off the opposition's calls for a second Constitutional Convention, something the framers looked upon—to quote Washington—as an "insidious" plot to destroy the national government by "set[ting] every thing afloat again."

Madison, as much of a Federalist kingpin as existed in a remarkably leaderless House of Representatives, wasted no time that spring. Using the recommendations of his home state's ratifying convention as a guide, he distilled the multitude of disparate proposals from the various states down to a workable number and hurried them to a committee. In August the full House took up the issue; by September it was in the hands of the Senate, and three weeks later twelve amendments were on their way to the states for ratification. Two years later ten of the twelve had been added to the Constitution. In an inaugural address that he wrote but never delivered, President Washington had planned to suggest that it would be imprudent to immediately alter the Constitution in any manner. It seems unlikely, therefore, that he had anything to do with Madison's decision to initiate

the process, and there is no evidence that Washington played any role in the course of Congress's consideration of the proposed amendments.

BY EARLY AUTUMN 1789, Washington, longing for a break from the tedium of his job, began to plan his initial presidential trip. Since boyhood he had been convinced that travel was a formative and educational activity; it was good exercise too, something he now could use to regain his vitality. Before setting out he tested his strength with periodic walks and horseback rides, and on one occasion he and Vice President Adams, together with a few congressmen and Chancellor Livingston, undertook a long trek out to Long Island to inspect a fifty-year-old botanical garden.

By mid-October Washington felt fine once again, and when Congress voted to adjourn until after Christmas, the way was clear for his departure. New England seemed the logical place to go. Aside from his brief meetings with Rochambeau in 1780 and 1781, he had not been in that section since his first year as commander fourteen years before, and he had never been north of Boston. Hurrying to beat the onset of winter in that quadrant, he set out in mid-month, his second long journey that year, for in April he had traveled more than two hundred miles in riding from Mount Vernon to the capital.

Once again he proceeded without his wife, for she preferred to remain at home with her grandchildren George Washington Custis and Eleanor Parke Custis ("Nelly"). A three-day ride, during which time he seems to have been chiefly absorbed by the state of the farming he observed ("their hogs large but rather long legged," and "all the Farmers busily employed in gathering, grinding, and expressing the Juice of their Apples," were typical of his diary entries), carried him through northern Manhattan's forests, into Connecticut, and finally to New Haven. He spent a Sunday in that little college town, attending an Episcopal church in the morning and Congregational services in the afternoon. A couple of days later he reached Hartford, where he had come once before to confer with French military leaders, and nine days after he left the capital he entered Cambridge, there to find Lieutenant Governor Samuel Adams at the head of a delegation sent to greet him and to escort him across the Charles River. In each village he had been greeted warmly, fêted, serenaded, paraded, saluted, and ushered about by the ubiquitous trainbandsmen.

Boston was no different. A large and festive crowd turned out, oddly grouped by professions, each species of craftsman standing beneath a banner that identified its skill. Washington rode under an arch inscribed "To the Man who unites all hearts," and on past a sign that announced "Boston relieved March 17, 1776." It was gracious and charming, except for one thing. The governor of Massachusetts, John Hancock, had not bothered to welcome the president, nor had he offered his residence as a lodging. The President of the United States



"Sat from ten to one o'clock for a Mr. Savage, to draw my Portrait for the University of Cambridge, in the State of Massachusetts," wrote the fifty-seven-year-old president in his diary on December 21, 1789. Edward Savage's painting of Washington, commissioned by the president of Harvard College, was completed the following year, as was a second one by him (above), made at the request of John Adams.

found quarters at the widow Ingersoll's boarding house at Court and Tremont.

The episode set Washington fuming. Not only did he feel slighted, but he perceived a constitutional issue in this absurd affair. He reasoned that protocol demanded that a lowly governor must call upon the president before the nation's chief executive paid his respects to the state official. Under the circumstances Washington refused an invitation to dine at the governor's mansion, taking his meal instead at Mrs. Ingersoll's residence. When Samuel Adams dropped in during the meal to wanly plead that Hancock had been too ill to welcome the president, Washington remained obdurate, asseverating that he "should not see the Govr. unless it was at my own lodgings." The next day things were straightened out. Alleging that he had been laid low by the gout, the governor had himself carried on a stretcher to Washington's domicile, where he officially and complaisantly greeted the province's guest.

The following morning Washington awakened ill with a cold and an inflammation in his left eye, one of the first victims of an influenza epidemic about to sweep over Boston, an outbreak the citizenry soon would dub the "Washington flu," as if he had brought it to town. Nevertheless, he went to tea at Hancock's that afternoon, and he spent almost all of the following day attending state ceremonies. Departing Boston on the twenty-ninth, he visited Harvard College, where he seemed to be astonished at the magnitude of its thirteen-thousand-volume library. Marblehead, whose sons had been indispensable in his escape from Brooklyn and his attack on Trenton in 1776, was next on his itinerary. The president had insisted on coming to this seaport town, but he was depressed at what he found, noting in his diary that the village's "streets [are] dirty—and the common people not very clean."

During the next several days Washington called on a bevy of burgeoning little manufacturing towns, places like Lynn and Salem and Newburyport, where he lingered to watch the production of shoes and textiles and ships. Accompanied by John Adams he took his leave of Massachusetts at the end of the month, riding into the gaudy autumn splendor offered by New Hampshire. There he called on John Sullivan, the fiery general he had so trusted, fished a bit, visited several municipalities, and inspected still more textile mills.

Washington journeyed as far north as Kittery, Maine, before turning back. He had planned to cross through Vermont to Albany, returning to New York City along the Hudson path that he knew so well. However, a heavy early-season snow in the mountains induced him to return by a more direct route. That was a lucky break in a way. During his stay in Boston he had hoped to visit Lexington, the little hamlet where the war had begun in 1775, but the junket had been postponed because of his brief illness. Now he took the opportunity to pass through the village, remaining just long enough to sight-see for a few minutes and to have dinner.

Although he never seemed to weary of the populace's

surfeit of good will, Washington found the return trip tedious and often unpleasant. His lodgings frequently were poor (widow Collidge's house in Watertown being "indifferent," and Perkins's Tavern in Pomfret, Connecticut, "by the bye is not a good one"). Faulty directions provided by "blind & ignorant" farmers more than once caused him to go out of his way, and a detour to see "Old Put," Israel Putnam, backfired inasmuch as Washington discovered that his former general did not live where he thought he did. Twenty-eight days after he set out, the president returned to New York, happy to find Martha and the grandchildren well, probably not so pleased to find the First Lady had scheduled a levee and that he barely had time to change from his dusty traveling attire before he had to begin greeting the guests.

THE PRESIDENT had almost two months to rest before Congress returned in January 1790. In fact, the new government was forming so slowly that there was little work to undertake; the air of urgency that had driven the Federalists in 1786-87 seemed to have disappeared like an early morning fog under a hot sun. By year's end only about 10 percent of the federal bureaucracy had been appointed.

Washington relaxed while he awaited the new year. When the fall weather cooperated he walked or rode, and he particularly liked to make the "14 Miles round," a long circuitous carriage ride about a portion of Manhattan Island, a journey he enjoyed in the company of Martha and sprightly Nelly and George Washington Parke Custis, or Wash, or "little Washington," as Martha called him.

These jaunts were undertaken as much for Martha's serenity as for his own. She missed Mount Vernon terribly, and she seemed to feel cheated by Washington's decision to quit his life of retirement. After the war, she said, the "dearest wish of my heart" had been that she and her husband could "grow old in solitude and tranquility together" in Virginia. Were she younger, she conceded, she might enjoy being First Lady. But she was too old now even to partake of "the innocent gaities" of public life. Not only that, she was treated "like a prisoner," tied down to her Cherry Street residence and unaware of what was happening in the city. Hers was "a very dull life here," she told a relative. The rides helped her adjust to public life, and though she never overcame her homesickness, she did come to appreciate New York both as a consumer's paradise and for the educational opportunities it offered her grandchildren.

During that fall the Washingtons attended the theater and a ball; the president sat for the artist Edward Savage; and, of course, the First Family entertained frequently. One of their parties almost ended disastrously. The ostrich feathers in the headdress worn by one of the guests brushed against a chandelier and caught fire, but one of the president's young aides acted quickly and intrepidly, extinguishing the flames with his bare hands before the lady or anyone else was injured.

During these weeks Washington's behavior changed in only one way. After years of seldom attending church services, he once again regularly dropped in on Sunday devotions. He missed only one Sabbath worship service (and then because the weather was atrocious) during the last twelve weeks of the year, and he proclaimed the final Thursday in November a day of thanksgiving.

On January 7 the president's wait for the return of Congress ended. The following morning he rode to Federal Hall to deliver the first State of the Union Address. Dressed gravely in a blue-black suit, and speaking not only to the legislators and department heads but to a large number of citizens who pushed into the chamber, Washington, in the words of one of the senators, "read his speech well." It was brief and innocuous in content, though couched in an upbeat tone. Washington announced that he sensed an "increasing good will" toward the new government, inasmuch as North Carolina at last had ratified the Constitution, leaving only recalcitrant Rhode Island outside the fold. Otherwise, he gave no hint of an administrative program, save for a few general remarks about "providing for the common defense."

A WEEK LATER Congress learned what the administration wished to do in the financial realm. Pursuing an earlier House of Representatives directive to prepare a plan for retiring the national debt, Treasury Secretary Hamilton unveiled his answer. Although poor record-keeping resulted in much confusion over specific accounts, there was not much question about the basic nature of the public debt in 1790. Totaling about \$75 million, it fell into three classes: a foreign debt of about \$12 million, about three-quarters of which arose from wartime loans made by France; about \$40 million in debts and interest accrued by the pre-1789 Congress, once again most of it resulting from the war years when the national legislature had issued bonds and promissory notes to obtain supplies and pay wages; and, finally, around \$25 million in state debts that had arisen primarily after 1780 when a vitiated national government virtually had asked the states to pay for the conduct of the war.

Together with the roughly thirty-five other employees in the Treasury Department (its personnel ledger was about seven times greater than that of either of the other departments), Hamilton had spent the autumn and early winter hard at work on meeting the House's instructions. Toiling in his chilly, sparsely furnished little office—all the furniture in the room would not have cost ten dollars, a French visitor clucked—Hamilton quickly learned a few things. Almost everyone, he discovered, favored retiring the foreign debt and Congress's indebtedness, but the states' debt was a different matter entirely, inasmuch as four or five states already had virtually met their obligations. In addition, there was not likely to be anything resembling unanimity on a proposal to redeem the Continental securities at their present value, nor would everyone favor recompensing

the current owners at the original value of paper.

Considering the magnitude of the problem, Hamilton worked with stunning swiftness. Within one hundred days he completed his labors, setting forth his conclusions and plans in an abstruse and ponderous forty-thousand-word *Report Relative to a Provision for the Support of Public Credit*. Almost hidden within the recondite language of the secretary's account was a disclosure of the Federalist's first step toward a planned revolution to save the Revolution.

Hamilton, inspired by Great Britain's financial practices during the past half century, proposed not just to adopt the methods of the former parent state, but through those means to see that republican America was recast as nearly as was possible along the lines that had existed in the pre-Revolutionary, pre-republican days of the colonial era. The British political system would be recapitulated in an American guise. The secretary's plan was to bring both concepts into full play, in the process establishing the powerful and sovereign national government of which he and Washington had dreamed since the time when they had looked out on cold, hungry, unpaid, and potentially unwilling soldiers in Revolutionary cantonments.

Furthermore, Hamilton sought a safeguard against what he had referred to at the Constitutional Convention as the "caprice and contumacy" of America's inhabitants. The Constitution had already made a start, for it had isolated the election of the president from popular stridency, it had denied the electorate a direct vote in the selection of senators to their lengthy terms, and it had erected myriad checks to forestall the House should it act in too democratic a manner. All that remained was to elevate America's lords of commerce and manufacturing, its financial barons and landed nabobs, to a peerage standing; while that certainly was impossible, the propertied elite could be firmly attached to the new government, a guarantee of stability and an assurance that the refractory among the privileged would be kept in its proper place.

Hamilton proposed that the full indebtedness, principal and interest, on the foreign, national, and state debts be paid, and that this be accomplished by the federal government's funding the entire obligation. His plan was that the old chits be liquidated through a brand-new indebtedness. A new loan would be issued by the United States, subscribers to the new securities generally realizing about 5 to 6 percent interest, and, in some instances western land as well, depending on which of several plans they bought into. With this revenue the old indebtedness would be retired.

By this process Hamilton hoped to do two things. Assuming naturally that almost all the "stockholders" in the new national government would be drawn from among the most privileged class of the citizenry, his plan would bond that important element, with its power and prestige, to the new government, for redemption of their investment would hinge on the very survival of that government. Moreover, not only would the state credi-

tors be brought under the aegis of the national government, but the states, left with no reason to raise taxes, and, almost stripped by the United States Constitution of access to the best sources of taxable wealth, would simply atrophy, becoming little more than unnecessary appendages to the body politic. The new United States government would be truly sovereign and unimpeded, in theory guided by the general will of the people, but in actuality drawing its sustenance from the "better kind of people," as Washington had labeled the privileged class on the eve of the Constitutional Convention.

THE SECRETARY'S REPORT ignited a firestorm in Federal Hall, but not because his adversaries found the plan's elitism to be repugnant. As historian John C. Miller has pointed out, this was "a quarrel within the house of capitalism," one that would pit section against section, not class against class. Most of the opposition rolled up from the planter-dominated South. With over four-fifths of the national debt owed to inhabitants of northern states, with the majority of southern states already out from under their former indebtedness, and with Hamilton's plan certain to strengthen northern businessmen at the expense of southern agrarians, disapproval of the plan chiefly came from congressmen hailing from below the Mason and Dixon Line. Added to these ranks were others who balked at the prospect of payment at face value to the present holders of the national securities. To Hamilton's astonishment, James Madison, his old colleague from the ratification fight days, took the lead in organizing the resistance. It was a battle that would consume most of 1790.

Madison responded in mid-February with an alternate plan. On the certificate question his scheme was to pay the full value of the securities only to those original holders who never had sold their notes; otherwise, speculators would receive an amount equal to the highest market rate (plus interest) attained by the securities between acquisition and January 1790, while the difference between face value and the compensation received by the speculator would be paid to each original holder who had sold his note. As for the assumption of state debts, the young Virginian proposed that the national government merely take on the debts that had existed as of the end of the war in 1783.

His was hardly a radical alternative to Hamilton's schemes. Madison had not recommended that the debt be scuttled, as it still was to be paid. Nor had he complained of the size of the federal outlay, for, in fact, his plan would have required an even greater national expenditure. His contrivance did seem more fair in many ways. Soldiers, some of whom had been drafted and others who had volunteered for lengthy service, finally would be paid more or less what their government had promised them when they were enticed—or coerced—into making a sacrifice for their nation. Moreover, those states that had been sufficiently responsible to meet their obligations, would not now have to bear an extreme burden to help out their feckless neighbors. But

moderate and fair as were his views, Madison's notions about the domestic debt faced absolutely no prospect of enactment by a Congress composed largely of capitalist businessmen and investors who were disinclined to set such a precedent when it came to financial speculation. The problem of the state debts was a different matter altogether, however, and as the first signs of spring triumphed over New York's winter, and even when June's warmer days arrived, the battle still dragged on, leaving Congress prostrate in its wake.

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON did not play a direct role in this protracted battle, although no one doubted that he supported the position taken by his treasury secretary. He was content to leave the issue to the legislators, for his task, as he saw it, was to make recommendations, then to execute whatever Congress decided. During the first weeks of the congressional fray he occupied himself with the never-ending chore of filling the ubiquitous new offices of the new government. He also seems to have devoted almost as much time and attention to acquiring a new residence, the Macomb House on Broadway, for which he paid nearly \$100 a month in rent. New and expensive, the squarish four-story dwelling was described by a visitor as the "grandest" house in the city, perhaps in America. That, in fact, seemed to be the principal reason for Washington's sudden interest in abandoning his Cherry Street quarters. Once he secured this mansion, the president immediately spent more than \$3,000 of his salary on new furniture and wallpaper for the place; still not satisfied, he spent another \$400 to construct stables and a wash house in the rear of the house, and a few weeks later, at an additional expense of \$75, he had a small dairy in operation behind the presidential mansion. On his fifty-eighth birthday he and Martha and the grandchildren began the move into their new dwelling.

Washington's move into such a high-rent district seemed to put an end to his continual complaints of financial hardship. There can be little doubt that his lack of liquid assets did present a problem, and, in fact, he was compelled to borrow a large sum at 6 percent per annum—an excessive rate of interest, he charged—before leaving Virginia for New York. But he had no sooner taken the oath of office before Congress voted him a generous salary. Actually, Washington had proposed that he be compensated only for his expenses, a tactic that had actually served him quite well financially during the inflationary surge that accompanied the war. But the legislators refused the proposal this time, instead providing him with \$25,000 per year, five times the amount it voted for the vice president, and about one hundred times what a skilled artisan in New York City might earn in 1789. From that amount, however, Washington was expected to meet both his private needs and his public responsibilities, including the entertainment, labor, and even the travel expenses occasioned by his office. The salary was ample to permit a comfortable,

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Pierre Charles L'Enfant: Designer of the Nation's Capital

by Brian McGinty

ONE DAY during the summer of 1791, President George Washington rode his horse across the brow of a green hill overlooking the Potomac River not far from Georgetown, Maryland. At his side was thirty-six-year-old Pierre Charles L'Enfant, a French-born artist, engineer, and architect who was also a retired major in the Continental Army.

Washington had traveled south from his executive office in Philadelphia to inspect the site of a new capital city for the United States. L'Enfant, in turn, had come from his temporary headquarters in Georgetown to show Washington his plan for the projected city.

The general and the major were old comrades of a sort. L'Enfant had been only twenty-two when, early in 1777, he left his native France to join Washington in the struggle for American independence. He had suffered with the American commander through a bitter winter at Valley Forge, then distinguished himself in the battles of Savannah and Charleston.

After the war, L'Enfant had designed the badge and membership diploma of the Society of the Cincinnati (of which Washington was president), but his most notable accomplishment was the remodeling of New York's old city hall. On the balcony of the renovated building—renamed Federal Hall—Washington had taken his oath as first president of the United States in April 1789.

Even before Congress had authorized the construction of a permanent capital city on the Potomac, L'Enfant had written to Washington, asking to be employed in laying out the new city. The president had replied by asking him to inspect the site and prepare drawings.

It is not hard to imagine the excitement with which L'Enfant now explained his plan to Washington. On the eastern horizon was a high hill that L'Enfant called "a pedestal waiting for a superstructure"—a perfect site for the great edifice that one day would house the Congress of the United States. To the west, on the edge of a ridge facing the north bank of the Potomac, was a splendid site for another great structure that L'Enfant called the "Presidential Palace." In the space between these two buildings, L'Enfant envisioned streets and avenues planted with trees; squares and plazas with monuments and fountains; and government offices and long rows of houses. In all, L'Enfant's plan encompassed fifty square miles and allowed for a city of 800,000 inhabitants—about the size of Paris.

Only a few days earlier, in the study of his home at Mount Vernon, Washington had inspected L'Enfant's preliminary drawings. Even then, he was impressed by the grandeur and balance of the architect's vision. Now, at the site he had personally selected for the new capital, the president expressed his warm approval of the design. He was convinced that L'Enfant was the best man to carry out the difficult work of planning—and eventually building—the federal city.

As he returned to the temporary capital in Philadelphia, the president was determined to proceed apace with the city on the Potomac. He was undaunted by critics who thought the new capital an extravagance. And he was unmoved by those who charged that L'Enfant's plan was too "imperial" for the infant republic.

Thomas Jefferson, who as Washington's secretary of state was nominally in charge of the project, thought the city should be a modest affair—something on the order of Williamsburg. But Washington pointed out that Philadelphia occupied an area measuring fully three miles by two. "If the metropolis of *one* state occupie[s] so much ground," the president asked, "what ought that of the United States to occupy?"

Nobody who saw the plan that Washington approved had any doubt about its originality. There was a regular grid of streets, to be sure; but the grid was crossed at angles by broad avenues. There were squares and plazas, and a broad esplanade that led down from the Capitol on the hill to a park in front of the "Presidential Palace." A creek was to be channeled into a canal, and the canal diverted into a grand "cascade" that would pour down the western slope of the hill on which the Capitol stood.

But there were some who doubted the practicality of L'Enfant's plan. Others wondered if the Frenchman could bring himself to work under the commissioners who had legal authority over the District of Columbia. L'Enfant was known as a brilliant man, but he was also reputedly stubborn and extravagant.

Despite his faith in L'Enfant, Washington was distressed when the newly appointed designer failed to produce an engraving of his plan in time for a scheduled auction of lots in the new city. He was again irritated when L'Enfant suggested that the government borrow the grand sum of \$1 million to finance public improvements in the new capital.

Finally, when L'Enfant flatly refused to acknowl-



edge the authority of the commissioners, he felt the full force of Washington's wrath. At first the president sought to reason with the architect, but when L'Enfant persisted in his defiance, Washington reluctantly decided to dismiss him. "It is much to be regretted," Washington wrote, "... that men who possess talents to fit them for peculiar purposes should almost invariably be under the influence of an untoward disposition. . . . But I did not expect to have met with such perverseness in Major L'Enfant."

The French designer soon left the Potomac area to design water works in New Jersey, fortifications in Maryland, and large private homes in Philadelphia. But he met with little success in any of these projects. He was, as always, bold and innovative in his work, but equally extravagant and obstinate.

Some time after 1800 L'Enfant returned to the federal capital to claim compensation for his design (which, with modifications, was still being followed by the city's builders). He had earlier refused to accept Congress's offer of \$2,625.00 and "a Lot in a good part of the City." Now he pressed his demands for many times that amount. Clad in ill-fitting clothing and often complaining bitterly of the government's "ingratitude," the Frenchman cut a lonely figure as he stalked the streets accompanied only by his dog.

The designer of the capital spent his last years in poverty. When he died in 1825 he was buried in a humble grave in rural Maryland.

In 1909, Congress appropriated funds to remove L'Enfant's remains to Arlington National Cemetery. There, on the brow of a green hill overlooking the Potomac—a hill much like the one he and George Washington rode over in 1791—L'Enfant was reburied in a simple stone vault.

Compared to the monuments that stand all around it, L'Enfant's grave is unimposing. But, across the river, a soaring Capitol crowns a "pedestal" of a hill; a "Presidential Palace" looks across a park onto a broad river; and streets, avenues, squares, plazas, offices, and houses comprise one of the world's great capital cities. Nearly two centuries have passed since Pierre Charles L'Enfant laid the foundations of Washington, D.C., but the city still remains his greatest monument. ★

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What Hath Morse Wrought?

TODAY the mail brings advertisements for leatherbound sets of collected European literary works, and television commercials promise phonograph records containing dozens of famous compositions from the classical masters.

But importing and selling art en masse from the Old World is not new. In the 1830s two famous Americans planned one spectacular painting that would actually be thirty-eight pictures in one. The work would summarize European art history, making it widely accessible to small towns across the United States.

The two men were James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851), author of *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Deerslayer*; and his good friend Samuel F.B. Morse (1791-1872), inventor of the telegraph and developer of the Morse Code.

From early childhood Morse had been interested in art. His father, the Reverend Jedidiah Morse, "the father of American geography," had not approved. Educated without distinction at Phillips Academy, Andover, and at Yale College, Samuel Morse graduated in 1810. While at Yale Samuel had become known for his miniatures on ivory, but his father still discouraged him from an art career.

Morse was working as a bookstore clerk in Charlestown, Massachusetts, when his paintings attracted the attention of artists Washington Allston and Gilbert Stuart. Morse's parents finally consented to support him in his artistic pursuits, and, in 1811, he went to England to study with Allston for four years, and at the Royal Academy in London, where he met the great American artist Benjamin West.

Morse was truly dedicated to his

art. "My ambition is to be among those who shall reveal the splendors of the fifteenth century," he wrote his family, "to rival the genius of a Raphael, a Michelangelo, or a Titian; my ambition is to be enlisted in the constellation of genius now rising in this country; I wish to shine, not by a light borrowed from them, but to strive to shine the brightest."

Morse won favor in Europe with two paintings and *Hercules*, a terracotta sculpture that won the 1812 gold medal of the Society of Arts. But in 1815 he had to return to Boston because his parents could no longer support him. He strongly objected to their summons, fearing that his return would mean an end to the cultivation of "the talents which Heaven has given me for the higher branches of art."

Back in Boston, Morse opened a portrait studio. He painted the likenesses of such famous personages as John Adams, James Monroe, Judge Stephen Mix Mitchell, William Cullen Bryant, and the Marquis de Lafayette. For fourteen years he lived a precarious, vagrant existence in New England and in Charleston, South Carolina. Attempting to overcome what seemed to be American indifference toward the fine arts, Morse and other working artists created the National Academy of Design, and Morse served as its founding president during 1826-1842.

Throughout this time Morse had harbored hopes of returning to Europe. He was finally able to realize his dream in 1829 after having received commissions for a number of art projects. During an extended stay in Paris, Morse and his friend Cooper, also living in France, hit upon their grand scheme. The two discussed what was to become a sixty-nine-foot painting, *The Gallery of the Louvre*, showing thirty-eight

miniature copies of masterpieces by twenty-three artists. Similar "gallery paintings" had been popular during the seventeenth century. These art works usually depicted a wealthy collector and his family or friends walking in front of walls hung with his personal art treasures.

Morse began *The Gallery of the Louvre* in the winter of 1831-1832. He finally completed the ambitious work more than a year later, after returning to the United States. Pictured in the completed painting [reproduced on the following two pages] were four Titians, four Van Dycks, three works by Rubens, two by Rembrandt, and others by such noted artists as Caravaggio, Huysmans, Murillo, Raphael, and Tintoretto. Leonardo da Vinci's legendary *Mona Lisa* was also included. By copying the famous works of these artists, Morse had done what he once stated he did not want to do; his most memorable painting is "a light borrowed" from "a Raphael, a Michelangelo," and other masters.

The painting portrays the Salon Carré of the Louvre in Paris. Morse took artistic license; the scene as depicted is not a literal representation of the Salon Carré at that time, nor are the paintings reproduced to the same scale. Morse painted himself into the center of the picture; he is shown instructing a female art student. In the left background stands James Fenimore Cooper with his wife and daughter, symbolizing a link between the literary and the visual arts. A well-dressed man and a more middle-class woman and child also stand in the doorway, representing the value of the arts to all people.

Cooper and Morse had great plans for *The Gallery of the Louvre* when it was unveiled in New York City in October 1833. But the abort-

Samuel F.B. Morse's first calling was as an artist. But disillusionment with his most ambitious painting helped turn him to a better-known career as an inventor.

by Richard Sassaman

THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE, NEW YORK CITY



ive tour that followed proved to be a great disappointment and a commercial failure. The painting was praised by artists, but fees earned by its exhibition barely covered the show's traveling expenses.

Since shortly after his return to the United States, Morse had been earning a meager income as a fine arts professor—America's first—at the University of the City of New York, now New York University. Financially pressed, he finally decided to sell *The Gallery of the Louvre*. Cooper loved his friend's painting, but he could not afford to buy it, so it was placed on the open market. "I painted it in the expectation of disposing of it to some person . . . who could amply remunerate himself from the receipts of a well-managed exhibition," Morse wrote to prospective buyer George Clarke in June 1834. "The time occupied upon the picture was fourteen months, and at much expense and inconvenience, so that that sum [of \$2,500] for it, if sold under such circumstances, would not be more than a fair compensation."

Morse added, however, that "I have lately changed my plans . . . and have need of funds to prosecute my new plans. . . ." Clarke bought the painting for \$1,200, and added another \$100 for the frame, although as Morse's son Edward later wrote, "Even this was not cash, but was in the form of a note payable in a year!"

Morse's "new plans" involved testing his idea that information could be transmitted by electricity. An idle scientific conversation with a fellow passenger during his return voyage from France in 1832 had spawned the notion. Now the concept for what was to become the electromagnetic telegraph was slowly crystallizing in his mind.

But in 1834 Morse's thoughts

were still concentrated on his art career. At long last American historical painting was being taken seriously: four giant panels in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol building were to be painted, and a Congressional committee had been appointed to choose the artists.

As president of the National Academy of Design, and a long-praised American historical artist, Morse seemed the perfect choice to paint one of the works. Anticipating his commission, he sent a letter to Congressional leaders Daniel Webster, John Calhoun, and Henry Clay, pointing out that he had "devoted twenty years of my life . . . studying with special reference to the execution of works of the kind proposed"—ample proof of his "ability to do honor to the commission and to the country."

Unfortunately for Morse, a member of the Congressional selection committee, former President John Quincy Adams, wanted to open the competition to foreign as well as American artists. Adams felt, according to Edward Morse, that "there were no artists in this country of sufficient talent properly to

execute such monumental works."

An indignant, anonymous article in the *New York Evening Post* soundly attacked Adams's ideas. Adams, suspecting Morse as the author, made sure the artist's name was rejected by the committee. (Edward Morse has written that his father never heard of the entire matter until James Fenimore Cooper, the actual writer of the article, told him about it.)

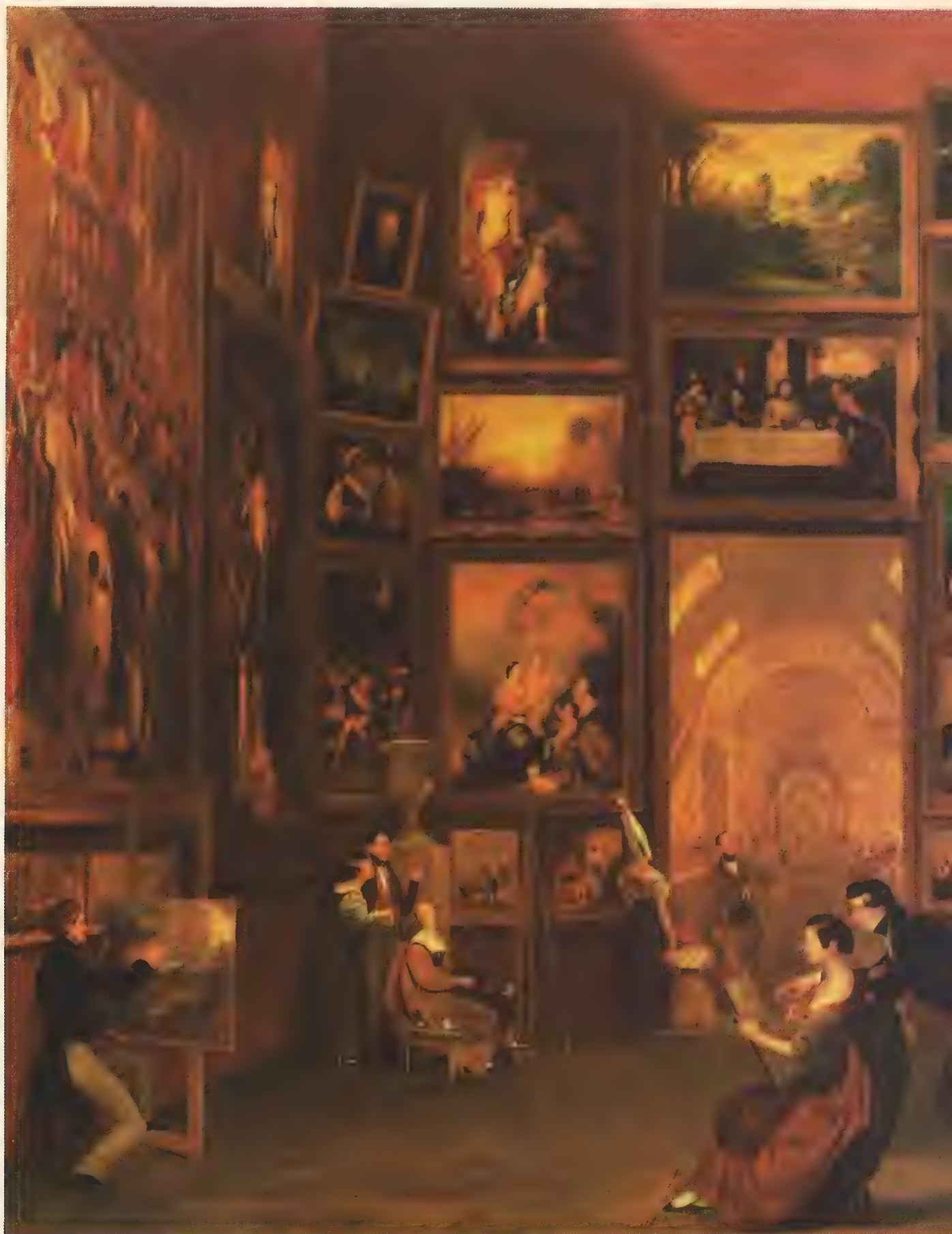
The circumstances surrounding the U.S. Capitol commissions were in part the immediate cause for the end of Morse's art career. Morse had also become increasingly preoccupied with the telegraph—and fatigued by the art world. In a bitter letter to his friend Cooper in November 1849, he wrote: "Painting has been a smiling mistress to many, but she has been a cruel jilt to me. I did not abandon her, she abandoned me. I have taken scarcely any interest in painting for many years. Will you believe it? When last in Paris, in 1845, I did not go to the Louvre, nor did I visit a single picture gallery."

Morse later added, "I have no wish to be remembered as a painter, for I never was a painter."

The Gallery of the Louvre, given to Syracuse University in 1884, remained there for almost one hundred years. In July 1982 it was sold to Daniel Terra for \$3.25 million, \$750,000 more than the previous high price for any American work of art.

Within a year of Terra's purchase, Morse's *The Gallery of the Louvre* completed a 150-year journey; it was shown at the Louvre in Paris as part of an exhibition of great American masterpieces. ★

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"My ambition," Samuel F.B. Morse wrote soon after beginning his formal art training in England, "is to be among those who shall reveal the splendors of the fifteenth century, to rival the genius of a Raphael, a Michelangelo, or a Titian . . . I wish to shine, not by a light borrowed from them, but to strive to shine brightest." Ironically, Morse's most famous painting, The Gallery of the Louvre (left), is "a light borrowed" from the Old Masters. The artist portrayed himself with a student at the center; his friend James Fenimore Cooper and family are in the corner at left. (For a listing of works pictured here, turn to page 6.)

Defining the Presidency

Continued from page 43

almost regal, style of living, although one could not live in a princely manner and expect to save any earnings.

Given his taste for elegance, President Washington probably lived in a more sumptuous manner than have any of his successors. Certainly he demonstrated that he could outspend his salary. During 1790 Hamilton's treasury granted him nearly \$7,000 more than he was due, although in the previous year he had been underpaid by about \$4,000, and in his last year in office he would receive about \$3,000 less than his stipulated salary.

Washington spent much of his salary on the kinds of things that any ordinary middle- or upper-class citizen would have indulged in. He had to purchase his own firewood (eight cords in September, an additional twenty in December, at a cost of about \$4.00 per cord). Schooling for Nelly and "Little Washington" had to be paid for. Washington's doctors charged \$210 to treat his illness in 1789 and \$200 to attend him the following year. Washington's ever-recurring dental work resulted in another outlay, this time for the purchase of a set of teeth made of hippopotamus ivory. Both President Washington and the First Lady—as well as the grandchildren—frequently attended the theater, tickets running about \$3.00 per person.

On the other hand, some of Washington's expenditures were more due to the nature of his office. He faced a staggering liquor bill, expending 7 percent of his salary on spirits, chiefly wine. Early in 1790 he purchased over \$450 worth of the beverage, and twelve months later he spent more than \$1,000 in acquiring two pipes of wine. The Washingtons also sought out the best cook they could find, hiring a chef for \$15 per month. But it is difficult to determine the dividing line between the requirements of the office and Washington's expensive tastes. For instance, his service staff—he referred to it as his "family"—was huge. He brought seven slaves along from Mount Vernon, all body servants and house slaves, and to their number he added fourteen white servants. In addition, he kept twelve to sixteen horses in his new stables at an expense of more than a thousand dollars annually; when he rode about in public, moreover, he sat on a gaudy new saddle, while his horses only appeared after they were draped in specially purchased showy leopard-skin housings. For that matter, the president and Mrs. Washington often wore fur coats, for which he had paid more than \$100. Indeed, Martha had her indulgences, spending \$50 a year at the hairdresser's and \$150 in 1790 on jewelry. All in all, it cost about \$115 a week—a year's income for an unskilled laborer—to run the president's house, and for his first term Washington's expenses exceeded \$100,000.

THROUGHOUT MARCH AND APRIL, while the wrangle over Hamilton's report continued, the president was not overly taxed with work. To be sure there were frequent meetings with his advisors, but there also was

ample time for exercising and sightseeing, and even for sitting for artist John Trumbull. Certainly no physical problems—save for a brief but painful toothache in January—had plagued Washington. He long since had recovered from his protracted disability of the previous year, and the rheumatic discomforts that had bedeviled him in 1786 and 1787 appear to have vanished by the early years of his presidency. By May 1790, well free of the supposed dangers of winter, Washington was in fine fettle.

Suddenly, however, Washington was struck down by another illness. Influenza, perhaps the same strain that had swept Boston the previous autumn, descended on New York that spring. Either that malady or pneumonia—his physician thought it the latter—felled him on May 9. Once again his life was despaired of, and even his principal doctor characterized the president's condition as so serious that he feared for the worst. For six days Washington seemed to linger on the edge of death, each day his breathing growing more labored, more shallow.

One shaman after another was summoned to the Maccabbee House until finally, strangely enough, late on the afternoon of May 16, just as suddenly as when the disease first had struck, an abrupt, dramatic reversal set in. Washington broke into a heavy sweat, his breathing and pulse rate seemed to improve; some hope began to spread through the mansion, though four more anxious days passed before the doctors pronounced him out of danger. For a week and a half he had lain near death, more desperately ill than he had been in nearly thirty years. A full month of recuperation awaited him before he possessed the strength to once again appear in public. In an age that believed each serious ailment stole away some of the patient's fighting reserve, Washington presumed that another such forbidding sickness probably would be his last, putting "me to sleep with my fathers." Perhaps he was correct. At any rate, many of his friends believed that he never again displayed the vigor that he had before this terrible illness.

WHILE WASHINGTON WAS RECOVERING, word arrived that on May 29 Rhode Island at last had ratified the Constitution. All thirteen states were now under its canopy. Equally cheering news reached the president a month later. He learned that some movement toward resolving the deadlock over Hamilton's fiscal plan at last had begun.

By June, six months after its introduction, Hamilton's assumption scheme still languished in Congress. In February Madison's plan to discriminate between the original and current holders of securities had been soundly defeated, while Hamilton's expedient likewise had failed in April. The secretary's plan had been defeated narrowly, however, raising the prospect of some sort of compromise solution, something that was being

discussed openly throughout the spring. The issue to which assumption most often was linked was the enduring debate over the site of the national capital. By 1790 the residence issue had kicked around the halls of Congress for seven years, with Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Annapolis, Williamsburg, even Nottingham, New Jersey, and Kingston, New York, in addition to various sites on the Susquehanna, the Scioto, and the Potomac having been mentioned as desirable locations. Agrarians wanted their legislators removed from the influence of big city financial moguls; southerners worried about keeping their slaves in a non-slave state; and everybody also saw the ultimate site in terms of a potential economic bonanza that they would just as soon have within their reach.

During that first month of summer in 1790 renewed stirrings toward a resolution of the two issues seemed to crystallize, arising perhaps from Hamilton's threats to resign if Congress rejected his program, or perhaps from the fact that some order had begun to take shape within the "leaderless herd" that had been the Congress. Thomas Jefferson's recent arrival in New York may have been important, too, as perhaps was the sixth sense of legislators who finally determined that at last the time to deal had arrived.

Four days before President Washington took his first halting ride following his recent illness, Jefferson brought Hamilton and Madison together for dinner at his house. By then the two Virginians knew they had the votes in the House to pass a bill that would move the capital temporarily to Philadelphia while a permanent seat was under construction at a site on the Potomac. They did not have the votes to get the bill through the Senate, however, and that was where Hamilton came in. If the treasury secretary would use his influence to block any attempt by northeastern senators to permanently base the capital in Pennsylvania or New York, Jefferson and Madison proposed, they would seek to change enough votes within the Virginia and Maryland delegations to enact Hamilton's economic program.

How successful these three bargainers have been the subject of considerable recent debate among scholars. Yet it is clear that while a majority of southern legislators continued to resist Hamilton's assumption bill, four representatives—two from Virginia and two from Maryland, all four from districts on the Potomac—made an about-face between the April roll call and the final vote in July. Moreover, Massachusetts's senators suddenly opted not to endeavor to undermine the Philadelphia-Potomac residence proposition. Hamilton also apparently facilitated matters by making some adjustments on details of his economic package, compromising on the rate of interest carried by the new debt and conceding to some states an increase in the amount of credit. Virginia and Maryland also offered enticements to facilitate the deal. Each state promised grants of land and cash if Congress voted to locate the new capital on the Potomac. Even Washington, who had remained in the background thus far,

pitched in. It is clear that he brought considerable pressure on Robert Morris to accept the bargain, and he probably subtly courted other congressmen.

The dark, labyrinthian ways of legislators make it impossible to recapture all the dickering and dragooning that must have occurred that June and July, but by mid-summer funding and assumption were the law of the land. It also had been agreed to transfer the seat of government to Philadelphia for ten years, then, in 1800, to move it to the banks of the Potomac. Congress directed that the federal district be located somewhere between the eastern branch of the Potomac (now called the Anacostia) and the Conogocheague Creek far to the west, a stream that enters the Potomac above present-day Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.

A few days after these historic votes, Congress adjourned. It would next assemble in Philadelphia. President Washington was also packing, planning to say goodbye, probably forever, to New York City, a city so remote in so many ways from his rural Virginia. First, however, he crossed Long Island Sound by packet to pay a state visit to Rhode Island, a place omitted from his itinerary during the past autumn because it had not then ratified the Constitution. The round trip was brief, taking less than a week. Upon his return to Manhattan his stay at the Macomb House was almost as short. For weeks, at least since his spring illness, Washington had planned an excursion to Mount Vernon, his first journey home in almost a year and a half. He felt good again, and he was buoyant at the prospects of the new government. Sixteen months into his presidency he still could report that "public sentiment runs with us, and all things hitherto seem to succeed according to our wishes."

The same day in all likelihood that he penned those thoughts a little box bearing a postmark arrived at the Macomb House. It was from the Marquis de Lafayette. Always impatient to hear from his dear young friend, Washington must have eagerly torn open the parcel. Inside, of all things, he discovered a key and a picture. The one was the jailor's key to the Bastille, the other a likeness of the prison being dismantled by a Parisian mob. The one symbolized the despotism of the Ancient Regime; the other, the etching, captured the notion that a great European power had commenced its own "leap into the dark."

Based on what little information he could get from the Continent, Washington knew that the sweeping revolution at Versailles and Paris was likely to be "stupendous in its consequences." As he and his family rode to the New Jersey ferry on August 30, President Washington must have wondered what those consequences would mean for his own nation. ★

John E. Ferling, professor of history at West Georgia College, lives in Carrollton, Georgia. His previous books include The Loyalist Mind: Joseph Galloway and the American Revolution (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977) and A Wilderness of Misery: War and Warriors in Early America (Greenwood Press, 1981).

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Continued from page 27

speeches to America's "immoral" war against a tiny country on the other side of the globe. His stance provoked a fusillade of criticism from all directions—from the NAACP, the Urban League, white and black political leaders, *Newsweek*, *Life*, *Time*, and the *New York Times*, all telling him to stick to civil rights. Such criticism hurt him deeply. When he read the *Times*'s editorial against him, he broke down and cried. But he did not back down. "I've fought too long and too hard now against segregated accommodations to end up segregating my moral concerns," he told his critics. "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

That summer, with the ghettos ablaze with riots, King warned that American cities would explode if funds used for war purposes were not diverted to emergency antipoverty programs. By then, the Johnson administration, determined to gain a military victory in Vietnam, had written King off as an antiwar agitator, and was now cooperating with the FBI in its efforts to defame him.

The fall of 1967 was a terrible time for King, the lowest ebb in his civil rights career. Everybody seemed to be attacking him—young black militants for his stubborn adherence to nonviolence, moderate and conservative blacks, labor leaders, liberal white politicians, the White House, and the FBI for his stand on Vietnam. Two years had passed since King had produced a nonviolent victory, and contributions to SCLC had fallen off sharply. Black spokesman Adam Clayton Powell, who had once called King the greatest Negro in America, now derided him as Martin Loser King. The incessant attacks began to irritate him, creating such anxiety and depression that his friends worried about his emotional health.

Worse still, the country seemed dangerously polarized. On one side, backlashing whites argued that the ghetto explosions had "cremated" nonviolence and that white people had better arm themselves against black rioters. On the other side, angry blacks urged their people to "kill the Honkies" and burn the cities down. All around King, the country was coming apart in a cacophony of hate and reaction. Had America lost the will and moral power to save itself? he wondered. There was such rage in the ghetto and such bigotry among whites that he feared a race war was about to break out. He felt he had to do something to pull America back from the brink. He and his staff had to mount a new campaign that would halt the drift to violence in the black world and combat stiffening white resistance, a nonviolent action that would "transmute the deep rage of the ghetto into a constructive and creative force."

OUT OF HIS DELIBERATIONS sprang a bold and daring project called the poor people's campaign. The master plan, worked out by February 1968, called for SCLC to bring an interracial army of poor people to Washington, D.C., to dramatize poverty before the federal government. For King, just turned thirty-nine, the time had come to employ civil disobedience against the

national government itself. Ultimately, he was projecting a genuine class movement that he hoped would bring about meaningful changes in American society—changes that would redistribute economic and political power and end poverty, racism, "the madness of militarism," and war.

In the midst of his preparations, King went to Memphis, Tennessee, to help black sanitation workers there who were striking for the right to unionize. On the night of April 3, with a storm thundering outside, he told a black audience that he had been to the mountaintop and had seen what lay ahead. "I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land."

The next afternoon, when King stepped out on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel, an escaped white convict named James Earl Ray, stationed in a nearby building, took aim with a high-powered rifle and blasted King into eternity. Subsequent evidence linked Ray to white men in the St. Louis area who had offered "hit" money for King's life.

For weeks after the shooting, King's stricken country convulsed in grief, contrition, and rage. While there were those who cheered his death, the *New York Times* called it a disaster to the nation, the *London Times* an enormous loss to the world. In Tanzania, Reverend Trevor Huddleston, expelled from South Africa for standing against apartheid, declared King's death the greatest single tragedy since the assassination of Gandhi in 1948, and said it challenged the complacency of the Christian Church all over the globe.

On April 9, with 120 million Americans watching on television, thousands of mourners—black and white alike—gathered in Atlanta for the funeral of a man who had never given up his dream of creating a symphony of brotherhood on these shores. As a black man born and raised in segregation, he had had every reason to hate America and to grow up preaching cynicism and retaliation. Instead, he had loved the country passionately and had sung of her promise and glory more eloquently than anyone of his generation.

They buried him in Atlanta's South View Cemetery, then blooming with dogwood and fresh green boughs of spring. On his crypt, hewn into the marble, were the words of an old Negro spiritual he had often quoted: "Free at Last, Free at Last, Thank God Almighty I'm Free at Last." ★

Biographer and historian Stephen B. Oates is Paul Murray Kendall Professor of Biography and Professor of History at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He is the author of twelve books, including award-winning biographies of John Brown, Nat Turner, Abraham Lincoln, and Martin Luther King, Jr. His newest biography, William Faulkner: The Man and the Artist, was published by Harper & Row in 1987. "This article on Martin Luther King," writes Oates, "is dedicated to the memory of James Baldwin, who had a powerful influence on me in the 1960s, when I was a young writer trying to understand the complexities of American race relations."

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A quarter-century ago many Americans were brought face to face for the first time with the institution of segregation—and the repression and cruelty it spawned—through images like the one above, showing a police dog ripping the trousers of a civil rights demonstrator in Birmingham, Alabama, in May 1963. Such scenes, occurring in full view of reporters, photographers, and television cameramen, helped to make people across the country more aware of, and sympathetic to, the issues that blacks were trying to further through their acts of protest. With that goal in mind, the Birmingham demonstration (which sought desegregation of public facilities) and other southern campaigns from 1963 to 1965 were organized by the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. King's strategy was to escalate the marches and press demands until events reached a point of "creative tension" when whites would either negotiate or expose the brutality of segregation by turning violent. For more on this civil rights leader, assassinated twenty years ago this month, see pages 18-27.